

# Seek Peace:

Being an



## Animadversion to Charity.

With some Paragraphs out of the Late Archbishop of Canterbury's last Sermon against Evil-speaking, and out of the present Lord Archbishop of York's Sermon upon Thoughts.

*John Tillotson*

*Sharp*

Psal. 119. ver. 69. The proud have imagined a lye against me, but I will not be moved by thy Commandments with my whole heart:

The law of thy mouth, is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver, 72.

All thy commandments are true; they persecute me falsely, O be thou my help, Ibid. 86.

Psal. 120 2. Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

Isa. 63. 9. In all their afflictions, he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them, in love and in his pity he redeemed them.

Ibid. 51. 7. Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness; the people in whose heart are my laws: Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings.

O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but guide thou the just.

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## A D V E R T I S M E N T.

**A** Book in the Press; Entituled the Rule  
 of Duty; being an Essay upon Lent,  
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 and for Morning and Evening, &c. Being a pre-  
 liminary discourse against evil speaking. By the  
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 ster to the blessed Martyr King Charles the 1<sup>st</sup>. of  
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## An Animadversion to Charity.

Prov. 17. 13. *Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house, ibid. 15. He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are a-bomination to the Lord, ib. 18. 5. and 19. 5. ibid. 26. 28. ibid. 27. 4 and 29. 23.*

*Every Man ought to love his own Peace, and Rest; and suffer no Storm to have room in his Bosome; for why should a Man that receives injury from another, transfer another Man's Sin to his own Punishment.*

I. **L**OOK not with an Evil-eye upon the Good that is in others; nor think their Reputation obscures thine; for every good Heart will rejoyce in the Good of all. To a good Man the commendable Qualities, that are in others, is a rejoycing to himself; therefore he will not cast a Cloud over them, but desire that all might be animated thereby to do the like. The bright Shinnings of other Vertues will not scorch you; none but a wicked Man will desire to raise himself upon the Ruin of others; and he, as soon as he have got an Ill-report of any good Man, he's presently industrious to send it abroad, he lets fly this Arrow with an incredible Swiftnes, for fear the innocent Man's Justification should overtake it. He does not consider that a Man's Reputation is too great, and tender a Concernment to be jested withal; nor that a slanderous Tongue bites like a Serpent, and wounds like a Sword. For what can be more barbarous next to sporting with a Man's Life, than to play with his Honour and Reputation; which to every Man that is tender of his Honour, is dearer than his Life. If the Evil we

say of others be false, it is an Injury beyond Imagination, and beyond all possible Reparation; and though endeavour afterwards to vindicate their injured Honour be made, yet that cannot make an

equivalent amends; because

\* *Satyres were always better received than Apologies.*

the \* Vindication seldom reaches so far as the Reproach. And because Men are rarely or never so for-

ward to spread the Vindication; nor is it so easily received after Ill-impressions are once made; therefore this is an Injury that often out-lasts Life, and degrades a Man when his Body is in the Grave; 'tis a Blemish to his Worth and Vertue, when his Body is moulded to Ashes; and in this case, how can Restitution be made? It therefore concerns us

to be very tender of the

† *Neither censure nor traduce any Man; reproach nor vilifie none; five Words cost Zacharias forty Weeks silence.*

† unblemish'd Vertue and Worth of our Neighbour.

Let us not therefore speak beyond the Truth in this, nor any other matter; for this will retaliate upon our

self, and be an Injury to

our own Souls, and 'tis against the Rules of Christianity, which is the best Institution in the World: The use of Speech is a peculiar Privilege of Man above all other Creatures, and bestowed upon him for some excellent End, to praise and glorify his Maker; but not to defame his Image in

the slanderous Abuse of his

|| *By communicating our Thoughts we make others partakers of those rich excellencies which God hath hid in the Mind: Speech is the Index of the Mind.*

|| The noble Faculty of speaking was given us to communicate our Thoughts to one another, and to implore the Pardon of our Sins, and the Blessings of

*My Mouth, nor Pen, is no Dictionary; it only serves as the needful Interpreter of my Heart.*

God

God upon all Mankind, and endeavour therewith to turn many to Righteousness; but by no means to wound the Reputation of others, nor to dishonour God, nor wound our own Souls: Besides, as all evil Actions are their own Punishment so is this; for very often by God's just Judgment, 'tis returned Seven-fold into their own Bosoms, if not in the same, yet in some other kind; for God is just, and will not suffer any Wickedness to go unpunished, and especially this, which is no less than Murther; for to wound the Innocent in their Reputation when they deserve it not, is no less than the Breach of the sixth Commandment; for next to Life is Livelihood, which is often lost together with a Man's Honour; for what Trust or Confidence will any repose in him, when his Reputation is gone? Every Man is afraid to have any Dealing or Commerce with a Man that is looked upon as a false or base Man. We ought therefore to be a mutual help, and comfort one to another, and to build up one another in our most holy Faith, and earnestly endeavour the Benefit of all; this is well pleasing to God, whose Creatures we all are, and whose Image we bear: Our Tongue was given us for Glory, to praise God, and to do good to Men: May we not therefore pervert the use of Speech, nor turn our Glory to shame, by abusing this noble Faculty to the Injury nor Reproach of any, in this we may honour Truth and shew regard to Justice; pity the Faults of all that err, and be sorry for them; then shall we take no pleasure in publishing them, considering that every Fault carries with it a very severe Punishment, and exposeth a Man to the Wrath of God, both here and hereafter. 'Tis always more honourable to stand up in the Defence, and Vindication even of our Enemies, than to accuse or speak Evil of them; We should look upon Injuries done us with mildness, considering our own Frailties, and hereby

acquire to our selves that Meekness which is grounded upon our own Worthlessness, and be so composed as to remit all to Almighty God, always praying for those, whose Souls are poor and diseased as well as their Bodies: For can an ulcered Leg, or withered Arm deserve our pity, more than a leprous Soul? How can I chuse but melt and soften at sight, which speaks a present, and abodes a future Misery; in us? As in *Joseph*, Nature should prevail above the Sense of wrongs; we should remember not that they are our Enemies, but that they are our Brethren: The natural Influences, deducible from hence is, that he who loves God loves his Neighbour also; because he cannot be the Child of God, nor acceptable to him, without sharing of that blessed Affection which God hath for the World.

2. He that easily credits an Ill-report of his Neighbour, is in a great measure as faulty as the first Inventor of it: For though he do not make, yet he propagates a Falsity; therefore such a Man is not just, nor can he have, while he remains such, any true regard to Truth; nor does he consider that himself, how wise or good soever he may otherwise be, yet have some Infirmities: If known to his Neighbour, may make him obnoxious to reproach upon one Account or other; he have some little Vanity, or Affectation, which may lay him open to the Raillery of a mimical and malicious Wit; therefore we should often turn our Thoughts inwards, and consider our selves, whether we like to be exposed to the Raillery of others, and if we would not chuse it our selves; wherefore should we deal it to others. But suppose the Man be really bad, we would thus expose, which perhaps too may be uncertain; yet if we should suppose the worst, 'tis yet better to preserve the Credit of a bad Man, than to stain the honourable Reputation of the good. They that will observe nothing in a  
\* wife

## An Animadversion to Charity.

\* wise Man; but his Over-  
sights & Follies, Failings and  
Infirmities, may render the  
best of Men very despicable;  
tho' if his life were fairly sta-  
ted, he would appear to be an  
admirable and excellent Man.  
Therefore if any Man will  
venture to speak ill of any,  
they should not conceal their  
good Actions neither; but if  
our Minds be wise, we shall  
easily find a Field large e-  
nough for innocent Conversation, without diving  
into the Faults of other Men; to mollify which is  
to ruminate upon our own; he that censures an  
other is become a Criminal, and a Judge at once;  
but when we are favourable in our Opinion of o-  
thers, and forgive them their Faults against us,  
we are at the same time merciful to our selves;  
but he that revenges and hates another is cruel and  
barbarous to himself. And hence we may discern  
what kind of thing true Charity is, how sweet and  
gentle, how kind and meek a Temper it is, how  
beneficial to Mankind, how delightful to our selves,  
and, by consequence, how acceptable to God: This  
is the Method whereby our Bodies may become a  
fit Temple for the Spirit of Purity to dwell in, and  
our Souls be filled with Righteousness, Peace, and  
Joy: And what pleasures of the Body can be com-  
parable to the Joys and Transports of such a Soul  
that hates all Evil, and loves

every Good, and all the true  
† Marks of it; wheresoever  
he finds it; and this may  
and oppressed by the mighty, is a sign of a generous and  
disinterested Spirit; the generosity of a brave Spirit will  
reason its self into Sympathy and Concern; to regard and  
love, and condole on the Suffering side.

\* Some Paragraphs out  
of the late Archbishop  
of Canterbury's last  
Sermon against Evil-  
speaking; (speak Evil  
of no Man; overcome  
Oppression by the Ex-  
ample of Vertue, by  
this, give an ocular  
Testimony of the strict-  
ness and regularity of  
your Life.

*John Tillotson*  
*Life of King*  
*25/2/1692*

† To stand by those who  
can neither reward nor  
protect; who are dis-  
regarded by the many



encourage us to purifie our Minds, that they may be filled with heavenly Delight and Pleasure, which are very amiable, and inviting, but the greatest earthly Pleasures are empty and vain; the World hath nothing in it, which is truly great and satisfactory; its most excellent Entertainments are strangely empty, mixt, and alloy'd, and fleeting. Every Man's experience is a daily Confession of this: For how taking soever a Pleasure may appear in Fancy and Prospect, yet 'tis common, that Men soon disrelish what they enjoy, and disdain what they possess. What is Greatness, it is so much nothing, that it deserves not a Name, it is a slippery Height, 'tis a glorious Slavery, a pretty Pageantry, and a fantastick Formality. The truth on't is, Pleasures here below is not to be measur'd by the Weight, and Substance of the Object, but by the Quickness and Strength of Fancy, or Imagination; from whence it appears, that the good Man only is Master of Pleasures, because he can make a good Choice, and find Pleasure in Contemplation, which far exceeds any worldly Pleasure; the Pleasures of the Mind being infinitely, preferable to those of the Body: But further, of imaginary Evils, there are many things which are not harsh and unsufferable in themselves, but they become such, because it is the Custom of the World to think them so: For example, a small Fortune, so it be sufficient for the necessary Comforts of Life, an inglorious Solitude, or private Life, the Opinions of others concerning us, &c. These things have no real Influence, either upon our Minds or Bodies, but according to our own Fancies, or Imaginations; they cannot make the Soul less rational, nor the Body less healthy; a Man may be happy here, and go to Heaven hereafter without much Fame or Wealth; so that all the Misery that is deriv'd from these things, depends upon Opinion, is plain; because some have made that Poverty, Retirement, and Contempt, their Choice, which is so terrible to the Thoughts  
of

of others; and so the same thing which is ones Affliction, becomes anothers Pleasure; which makes it evident that Fancy gives us the wound, not the things themselves; For if Misery were an inseparable Companion to the things themselves, it were impossible that Content should sojourn in Cells and Cottages, or ever be a Stranger to Wealth and Honour; from whence we may infer the Excellency of Holiness and Righteousness, which directs us to present and endless Happiness, and shews us the Emptiness of all things here below.

3. " If a Man had the Understanding of an Angel, he should be content to abate something of this Excess of Wisdom, lest he be thought cunning rather than wise. He hath the truest Wisdom, who is most refined from Vice, and become Angelical in his Nature, who minds not Earthly things, but have his Affections set upon Heaven, and Heavenly things, and have his Heart and Thoughts settled upon unseen things; to wit, on God, and on the Happiness the just Souls enjoy in Heaven; these are Thoughts becoming those, who are so near allied to so holy, so pure a Being; for Man's Original is from above; his Soul, I mean, is of noble Descent, the Divine being first breathed it into Man, and gave it the Name of the Breath of Life, *Gen. 2. v. 7.* The Soul while 'tis inclosed in the Body, derives mean and degenerate Inclinations from its Communion with it, but when the Body shall be raised a spiritual glorified Body, the Body it self will then become of a spiritual Nature, and be fit to be an Inhabitant of that glorious place, it will then be a suitable Companion to such a Soul, who while it dwelt in the Body, also, by Contemplation dwelt and conversed in Heaven, with God and Angel, by Divine Meditation, which is properly a labour of the Mind, and represents to us what we did not think of before, the Soul of Man came out of the hands of her Creator, like a rich

*|| The Soul borrowed her beginning from heaven.*

and curious Watch, carrying in her self the Cause of her own Motion; 'tis the Treasury of Wisdom and Goodness endued with many Excellencies; a Mind undefiled is the Chrystal-glass of the Soul, and is so transparent, that she evidently by the Opticks of Faith, beholds the Idea of the Almighty, but a sordid Eye cannot view the Splendor of a true Luminary: a well chosen Path is always advancing to Eternity; each Degree of Grace makes the lover of it become a living Monument of Celestial Grandeur; every Vertue is a Step to Eternity; he is so much onward of his Journey, that daily tramples upon his Vices, and gains the Victory over himself, and retains always in his Mind the Approach of the great Audit: This Life is but a Path to our Eternal Country; he that despises not the World to follow Christ, how will he be qualified to lay down his Life for him? There is no passing to true Happiness, but by contemning the Vanities of this vain World. Why should ambitious Honour delight thee? He that seeketh Applause of Men cannot be honoured by the Almighty; embrace that Good that is true and stable, then shall thy Heart be quiet and fixt trusting in the Lord: The Testimony of a good Conscience is above all other Riches; he is too covetous unto whom the Almighty is not sufficient: let Purity Reign in the Centre of thy Heart, and Verity possess thy Tongue, and embrace Justice; then shall it

*\* The vindictive Man will maliciously oppugn the just Praise of the Innocent, and ride in Triumph upon his Ruin; but the inoffensive Man wisely considers, 'tis better to fall with Innocency and Truth, than to stand with powerful Injustice: knowing that God will detect, rebuke and destroy all Diabolical Malice by his signal Providence, and himself stand up in the just Defence of injured Innocence; God's visible Protection will appear for their Deliverance, and instamp on them such a Character as can never be defaced.*

attend

attend thee in all thy Proceedings, and this Method will evidently demonstrate whether thou art travelling to Happiness or Misery; all the Applause and Breath of the World is insignificant, if thy Bosom-friend, thy Conscience accuse thee, and what can all their Detraction prejudice thee, if she upon good grounds defend thee? This potent Judge thou carriest about thee, is sufficient to justify thee if thy case be right in the sight of God. An unspotted Conscience is very acceptable in the sight of the Almighty, and will bear the innocent Man with Cheerfulness through every Difficulty. Always invoke the Almighty to strengthen thee with his preventing and assisting Grace, that at last he may esteem thee fit to receive a Crown of Glory: Heaven is not gained by pious Fraudulency, gilded Crimes, or fortunate Transgressions; the Almighty Eye will not be deluded by a gaudy Zeal: 'Tis not a counterfeit Sanctity that can invest us with Immortality; our Works, Actions, and † Words must be of the right stamp, if we intend they shall be of any future use to us; they must be as good Seed springing up to Eternity; † We do not convey Knowledge from Soul to Soul by Conceptions nor Preceptions, but by Speech. may we therefore sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit we may reap Life everlasting. Let the Celestial Rhetorick of thy Word attract us to Holiness, and increase in us sublime and pure Hopes; by thy supporting strength let us be enabled to overcome all Temptations; and when, in thy Service, be allured with Delights and Pleasures, and so supported as not to be cast down by Tribulations, nor entangl'd by Accusations; nor disrobed of Vertues, nor insnar'd into evil Habits and Customs; let these fly before us as the Morning Cloud, and as the early dew let them pass from us, and all the Graces succeed in their room; for these will be recreative to our immortal Souls; we shall delight in their exercise Day and Night, and never

obliterate the least Spark of them : Let us sow the Fruits of Righteousness, and we shall reap the Fruits of Mercy ; these Revenues are better than Gold, sweeter than Honey and the Honey-comb. Christ is the Object of a Saint's Joy, he is all in all to every Believer, out of him Faith can fetch all Supplies,

† *The Spirit of Fortitude consists in the being undaunted at Danger, fearless at the Frowns of Men, and in a steady freedom to vindicate the Truth of the Gospel, and the Honour of God, whatever may be the Effect or Consequence of it : The Doctrines of which are of a Celestial Original.*

he is our health in Sicknes, our strength † in Weakness, our ease in Pain, our honour in Reproach, our wealth in Poverty, our friend when Friendless, our habitation when Harbourless, our enlargement in Bounds ; the strength of our Hearts, and the Life of our Souls. Thus he intermixeth supporting Comforts with our Troubles ; his Goodness eminently discovers his Love to us ; he does not expose us too, till he hath prepared us for our

Trials : Tarry ye at *Jerusalem* till ye be endued with Power from on high : His Divine Strength is Preparatives to us to support us under those afflicting Dangers he is pleased to exercise us withal, though he suffer us to be severely dealt with on Earth, he will abundantly recompence us in Heaven ; not one upright Soul shall Eternally perish. I know saith holy Job, *That when he hath tryed me I shall come forth as Gold*, Job 23. 10. There is a solid Work of Grace upon the good Man's Soul that will abide the Trial, let the Judgment to come be as impartial and exact as 'tis possible to be : Yet a grain of sincerity cannot be lost in it : God will not cast away a perfect &c. an upright Heart ; he that is appointed to judge the World is mine, and his imputed Righteousness will make me full Weight in the Balance ; sincerity will abide when common Gifts, and empty Names will fly from the Face of Truth.



4. In all Afflictions, whether those of Reproach, or of any other Calamity; we are with resignation to submit our selves to the Will of Heaven; this is indispenfible necessary to our present, as well as future Good: It makes our present Evil seem less when we judge our selves, as in some Measure, to have deserved it, if not from the hand of those who inflict it, yet from God who have promised to sanctifie all Afflictions to us, when we bear them as a Token from him; *They will work together for our good*, according to that sure and never-failing Promise, *Rom. 8. ch. 18. v. 28.*

† Patience is not a Stupidity or Insensibleness of God's Hand, but a Calmness of Mind upon wise and holy

† *It is not Magnanimity, but Stupidity to make light of God's Corrections.*

Grounds, considering that these things we deserve in some Degree or other; and therefore, why should we not with Patience, at least, if not with || rejoycing

bear them. A Man may as well quarrel with God, that he did not create him an Angel, and that his first Station was not in the Courts of Heaven, as repine; because Providence is pleased to exercise him with some Trials, which are sent perhaps for the Exercise of his Patience,

|| *The Soul encreases in Wisdom by a chearful and a quiet Submission to the Divine Pleasure of Providence; when Afflictions are sanctified they produce the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness.*

and the Improvement of his Faith, that he may be found refined, Being proved by fiery Trials, to a Man that have wisely learn'd to bear Afflictions; they will not be intollerable, if we our selves sharpen not their Stings, nor slight our own Strength: If we have Reason about us, a firm Belief, and take with us the Assistance, and Confidence of the heavenly Protection: If our Afflictions be too big for our Strength, we are reasonably to expect supernatural Recruits; for since nothing befalls us but what

God

God have assured us

† As for me, my Complaint is not to Man,  
Job 21. 4. Ib. 9. 7.

The fear of Man  
bringerh a Snare, but  
he that trusteth in the  
Lord shall be safe,  
Prov. 29. 25. Ib. 9. 7.

He that walketh up-  
rightly wa'keth surely,  
but he that perverteth  
his way shall be known.  
Ib. 10. 9.

I go on to consider, that all real Evils attack the Mind or Body, for what assaults only Reputation, or Estate, may be reckoned among imaginary Evils; and some are of an Opinion, that they are in reality none at all, unless they make their Passage through these to the Mind or Body; but if they are

|| It is with the Mind  
of Man as with the  
Stone Tyrhenus; as  
long as its whole it  
swimeth, but once bro-  
ken it sinks: Grief to  
the mind is like a Moth  
to a Garment does In-  
jury to it.

shall be for our good, if we truly fear him; we may, while we † depend upon him in well-doing; expect an extraordinary Assistance from him, in an extraordinary Trial: If our Lives were by Divine Appointment to be a Martyrdom; that Divine Being would doubtless lend us that Assistance he allowed the Primitive Martyrs; since without it we could not glorify him by our Sufferings, having premis'd thus much,

once broke through here, they often are as a mighty || torrent bearing down all before it: For what are Arguments to the Stone, or Rhetorick to the Gout: but herein first either the Pain is moderate, or exquisite; if moderate, it is supportable, if exquisite, it cannot be lasting; in this case at least we are beholden to

the Frailty and Weakness of our Nature, for this in a great Degree prevents our unhappiness; a small Pain cannot make us miserable, and a great one will not let us continue so; for it crushes it self as well as us, by its own Weight, and our Nature dies and droops under the Pain which it cannot suffer; but again, he gains no small Step towards Happiness, who can divest these Evils of their affrighting

shapes,

shapes, which every Man shall in a great Measure do, who shall expect nothing more in this State, than what is proper to it; and such a Man when arrived to this, can no more be grieved at Death, Chance, Folly, &c. than at the Imperfection of his intellectual Capacities, or the Meanness of his natural Inclinations, and the Frailties of his Body; for the former are the Effects of the latter, and yet no Man thinks himself miserable, because he doth not understand as much as God does; because being a mortal Man, he doth not will as nobly as Angels; why then should he think it amiss, or hard, that being composed of earthly Matter, he must die and return to Earth again; or being imprudent, or passionate, any thing should act so; however, when any thing befalls us contrary to our expectation, we should behave our selves like Christians, submit to hard Fate, and endure mildly, even in the most accurate and severest Conflicts; this is the proper Season to shew our inoffensiveness; God hath not cast off his Paternal Care over us; notwithstanding he suffers us to be exercised with Severities, to prove the *†* Masculin strength of our *†* So long as the Mind Spirits, &c. the unshaken Con- *is whole and sound;* stancy of our Patience. What *the Speech is masculin* if Men ride over our Heads, *and strong.* and we go as 'twere through Fire and Water; yet he hath given us the undoubted hope of the wealthy Land, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, the promised Inheritance. Many Kings and wise Men have put off all the Ornaments of a just Sovereignty, to bear all the Indignities that the Sons of Men are capable of inflicting; yet their Minds have been serene amidst their own Dangers, whereby they shewed to the World and themselves the Lustre and Majesty of their Behaviour; may we therefore keep our selves under the riping Ordinances of the Word and Sacraments, these will influence us for Heaven; the faster we grow in Grace the sooner we shall be ready for

for Mercy: every gracious Action is the Seed of Joy, and every sinful Action the Seed of Anguish and Sorrow to the Soul that sowed it. Our Works do not pass away as soon as they are done; but as Seed sown, shall after a time, rise to Eternity; whatever we think, speak, or do, once spoken, thought, or done, is Eternal, and abideth for ever; hereafter we shall see distributive Justice shining out in its Glory.

† *He that is angry with a just Reprover, kindles the Fire of the just Revenger: the Trium- phing of the Wicked is but for a Moment; they that have the Righteous shall be desolate; God will take the mat- ter into his hand; he is the helper of the friendless,* Psal. 10. 16.

† Tribulation, Anguish, and Wrath, to every Soul of Man that doth Evil: but Glory, Honour, and Peace, to every Man that worketh good, God shall bring every Work into Judgment with it: be Good or Evil; let the firm Belief of this animate us to Good.

*The Counsel of the Lord shall endure for ever, his thoughts to all Generations,* Psal. 33. 11.

*Ye overwhelm the fatherless, and you dig a Pit for your Friend,* Job 6. 27.

*Encourage not perverse things,* Deut. 1. ch. 17.

*Ye shall not be afraid of the Face of Man, for the Judgment is Gods,* Psal. 61. 4.

*Their device is only how to put him out whom God will exalt, their delight is in Lies,* Psal. 44. 18.

Though all this be come upon us, yet do we not forget thee, nor misbehave our selves in thy Covenant. 'Tis not agreeable to Honour to be over severe in censure sometimes, even a good Person, through Mistake, or by Reason of false Evidence, may encourage Oppression, and strengthen the Hands of the Wicked. 'Tis Injustice when false Impeachments must pass for Truth. Unjust Ejection is a Wrong done, both to the Person ejected, and the Common wealth deprived of so good a Member, and is commonly known by the Name of Oppression, and Tyranny, to cast out causelessly.

Self.

9. Self-accusation in a Penitent is pleasing Rhetorick in Heaven; God hears the humble Orator, is delighted with his Sincerity, and charges the Enemy to hold his peace; to indulge our Body too much is a Mercy full of Cruelty: This is to serve the Body in order to kill the Soul; the best natural Gifts affords not that Sweetness and solid Comforts to the Soul that Grace doth. A Man may have an Understanding full of Light, and a Heart void of Comfort: If that Light that be in him be Darkness, how great is that Darkness; but if those few Sparks of Grace that be in you be true, God have promised that he will not quench the smoking Flax, nor break the bruised Reed: But those few Sparks shall be as our Saviour saith of the Grain of Mustard-seed, that though it be the smallest of all Seeds; yet it shall become the greatest of Trees; for true Grace is as a Fountain of true Lights, if it be well improved; true Grace affords full Streams of Peace and Comfort; Principals of Grace are of a Divine and Heavenly Original and Extraction, and gives present Comforts as well as full Tides of future Hopes, and these are supernaturally infused by the Spirit of God from on high, and this will ascend with the Soul into Eternity, and there receive its Perfection and Accomplishment; Gifts take their leave of the Soul, but Grace and Faith goes with it to Eternity; where Faith will be changed into Fruition, and Hope into Vision. To ruminate and dwell upon these holy Considerations, will much enlighten and exhilarate our Spirits, and cause our Breast to become as 'twere the Library of Christ, always delighting in spiritual things: 'Tis a greater Honour to be a Member of Christ, than to be the Head of an Empire, to be made one with him; to be a living Branch of him, is a greater Dignity than the Angels are capable of; for to which of the Angels said he, at any time *Thou art bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh*, behold what manner of love is this; 1 Epist. St. John 3. 1.

O free



Office Grace, never enough to be admired; the Dignities and Honours of the Kings of the Earth; are nothing comparable to that of a true † Christian; he in poverty can see the Riches of a Kingdom; even this becomes to him the way to Glory: What excellent Qualities have some Men! what a winning Affability, humble Condescension, Meekness, Righteousness, ingenious Tenderness, and Sweetness of Nature; of such a one it hath been said. Adam never finished such extraordinary gifts of Elocution and Magnanimity, as made them fit for the Employment of converting the World, and confronting the wisest of Philosophers. They lived by the best Rules, as well as gave them to others, which is a convincing Argument that they were of God: As also for the sake of publishing, propagating, and confirming the Truth of what they taught; they deny themselves all the Pleasures, Profits and Honours of this Life; which was an unanswerable Argument of their Divine Commission; to which we may add their admirable Patience, Resolution and Constancy; exposing themselves to the utmost Severities for the gaining Happiness in the future Life; with a brave Magnanimity despised all the Threatnings of their most potent Adversaries, and their saddening Speeches; as assuredly knowing God will in due time free them from their undeserved Durance and Troubles, considering he governs all things by the Measure and Rules of his All-knowing Providence, and hath assured us by his Divine Promise, that all things shall conclude as seemeth best to him; to them who are animated by him, to live by the Rule of pure and disinterested Christianity, that bright and glorious Discipline, that renders the Soul celestial, and the Mind grave, and sedate, affecting Peace, that procures Tranquility, and leads to unconceivable Perfection of Joy and Bliss.

ned

ned in this Man; meaning *Adam* himself, endued not the Qualities that are to be found in such a one: This Man excelled the generality of the Sons of *Adam*, in sweetness of Temper, and natural Endowments: What curious Fantasies, nimble Wits, solid Judgments, tenacious Memories, rare Elocution are to be found in some Men; and yet, if these Endowments should be separated from Grace, they would be all lost, and of none effect; but would rather prove to the Judgment or Condemnation of him that should be thus qualified, and abuse, or misuse those excellent Qualifications; because, if a right use be not made of them, they cannot be the Production of the Spirit of God, because they shew not themselves to be the Operation of Divine Grace. 'Tis possible for such a one, if these things are only notionally in him, to dispute himself out of Happiness: If after being endued with these rare Excellencies, he be destitute of that Power that ought to accompany them: To wit, such a Power as should change him from Vice to Virtue, from the power of Sin to the liberty of Holiness; that lovely thing so much to be admired wherever 'tis found, the Products of it are of an admirable Nature. Such an one can with full Assurance make his Application to God, in the time of affliction, to undertake for him: O Lord, Thou seest my Oppression, plead my Cause; deliver me from the uncharitable Dealings of the vile, and untaught, soften their Hearts with a Sense of their evil-actings, as their Sins cry for Vengeance; give them Grace to cry for Pardon; look upon them with the yearning Bowels, and melting Eye of a Father, and a Redeemer: Turn us all to thy Self by a holy Love, and Fear of thy great Name: let the severest Actings of thy wise Providence; learn us Righteousness, even that Righteousness they were designed to teach us; let us diligently search and try our ways, and turn earnestly to thee: Raise us up out of a State of Misery, which resembles Death; and in the  
midst

midst of Men's wickedness make known thy Power, and thy Goodness; and make us sensible, whatsoever we suffer it is thy Wisdom and Mercy that inflicts it; make us consider what thou canst, and what thou wilt do; for all that depend upon thee in well-doing; that thou wilt in Mercy deliver us from all our Troubles, and Oppression; for we trust in thee, and in thy Power, and under the shadow of thy Wings we shall find Refuge; until the unjust Rage of our Enemies be turned away: 'Tis not thy property always to hide thy Face, and forget our Misery and Trouble; the grievance of the Oppressors shall not abide for ever; be thou our Light against the Darkness of the Oppressors; fill us with unspeakable Joy after our Sorrow: Let not the Heart of the Righteous be sad; neither strengthen the Hands of the Wicked; but be pleased to bind up the broken, and recover that which is lost; that we may offer to thee an acceptable Offering of Righteousness; send thy Light and thy Truth into all our Hearts; animate us continually with thy good Spirit; Thou art the God of Knowledge by whom Actions are weigh'd; who wilt in due time deliver the Indigent from oppression and misery. For unto thee is their Appeal, deal with them according to the Innocency thou beholdest in them; thou hast seen my

† *Some are made mad by oppression, or desperate by too quick a sense of a continued Infelicity, according to Solomon, oppression, makes a wise Man mad.*

† *Wrong, plead thou my Cause, against the ungodly and unmerciful; inventors of Mischief, deliver me from the || deceitful and unjust: let not the oppressed go away*

|| *Hab. 1. ch. 13. The wicked doth compass about the Righteous: he devoureth the Man that is more righteous than he, Not considering that Misfortune shall stay the ungodly, and they that hate the Righteous shall be desolate, the tying lips shall be put to silence, which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully speak against the Righteous.*

*asham'd,*

asham'd, but rebuke those who reproach thy Servants, that interrupt the Peace of those that seek Peace, turn their Abuses to their Glory; in the mean time, support them with thy princely and principal Spirit, while for Conscience towards thee they suffer grief wrongfully; keep them in perpetual Peace, and stay their Minds on thee; let them take pleasure in Afflictions rather than in Sin, and count the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of the World.

6. A Death-bed Repentance seems to signify the eleventh Hour, when there is but one Hour more to work in. A late Penitent must date his Life from his Repentance, as the Immutability of God's Truth assures us; he that loves Sin is dead while he lives, as they that live in pleasure are said to be, *1 Tim.* 5. 6. this is to depart from the Fountain of Delights: God works not upon our Minds irresistibly; if we reject the Charms of his Love, we are bid to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, though in the same Breath we are taught 'tis God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. God works not upon our Minds irresistibly; we must diligently seek for grace if we intend to obtain it; we must earnestly endeavour to arrive to a Divine Temper of Mind; for then, it is when the operation of God concurs with our Diligence in the Work of our Salvation, from him it is that we extract strength to pay him due Obedience, without all controversy, God regards with what Reverence, Faith and Love we address our selves to him, who is enthroned in Heaven, over all Blessed for ever. 'Tis his Wisdom that affects our Hearts with the Love of Sanctity, and nourishes our Souls with a constant supply of his Mercy, to the very Day of Eternal Salvation: God himself will stand up in the just Defence of injured Innocency, and abused Truth; he will be their sure Pass port against every Danger; against such a Man nothing can be justly brought to blemish.

blemish his Integrity, it cannot be suspected. If an accidental Reproach should chanceto be his fate, yet God will victoriously deliver him: *Abraham* the Father of the faithful was exercised by nine Trials before his Faith was made glorious, by the tenth, of offering up his Son the true Type of the Death of the *Messias* King of *Salem*, by Works faith is made perfect, an operative working Faith is effectual to Salvation; a true Faith gives credit to all, and every part of God's Word; though they may seem to differ from the common Sentiments of Men; God and Heaven is the faithful Man's Meditation, all the Day and all the Night. Ample rewards are therefore in reserve for him; and these, though at a distance, Faith represents to him as present: This Man, the highest Portion on Earth, cannot swell his Mind; because by Affection, and Love, 'tis closely united to God: His Piety makes a Discrimination between him and the less faithful; the Sons of Earth will love the Earth, but the Sons of Heaven will long and pant after that glorious Country. Such a Man's whole Life is nothing else but a lively Comment on the distinguishing Mercy of God, towards him: His sorrow for his Sins have signalized to him the Infinite Mercies of God to his Soul: This Man dehorts from sin, by transmitting Piety to Posterity, he is therefore the happy Object of God's delight, he is his Friends joy, his Enemies envy, and the Rarity of the World, being repurg'd from all Impiety, by the Divine principle that is in his mind; he has begun to imitate the Seraphick example of the Ancient worthies; he will therefore resemble them in their happy Station above, where Eternal Joys will for ever possess each holy Heart; 'tis not a sublime Fancie that can entitle us to these, but true Sanctity that can alone reach it; you will then be Master of such Joys, as in this Life, the Heart in all its Divine Raptures never knew; so comfortable are the Beams that each Act of Piety procures to each holy Soul; they fill it with holy Confidence and Trust



in God, and excite in him holy Admiration of that immense Being, the Rock of our Strength, to whom we lift up our Spirits, by whose Divine assistance it is we are able to arise, and dress our selves for Eternity, and accomplish our Souls for the Eternal embraces of the God of Love, for whom we ought to have a profound Veneration; and to shew it by adorning and beautifying our Souls, by all such Acts as are delightful to him; ruminate therefore upon such things as may allay the Gaiety and Vaniry of our Minds; for in the future Life nothing will do us so much good as the Graces, and Verrues of our Minds: These will follow us to Heaven, and feed us with Content, and Happiness to Eternal Ages; all good Actions will there be repaid us by Bills of Exchange, ten Thousand-fold, in Glory, and Honour, and Immortality; and ten Thousand Ages hence, we shall be enrich'd with the Product of it, and receive a vast Revenue of happiness from it, for ever; but

|| *To be content with ones condition, is the Philosophers-stone in Morality. Such a man is possessed with the pleasures of the mind, and enjoys Rivers of delights which he finds perpetually distilling into his Heart, arising from the confidence*

*we have in God; the contented Man resolves to be happy in whatsoever condition he is in, in despite of Fate; and the experiences of Misery; he values not what the Judgments of the World is concerning him: If his own consciences acquits him before the Eyes of God. What will it avail us to perswade our selves we are happy, upon the Faith of them who know us not? But on the other hand, the Man that is discontented, always thinks himself miserable, because other Men's conditions appears happier than his own; because he feels his own Ills, and not theirs; so likewise their Goods shews themselves to him without mixture, because he sees but their splendor, not their opposites; he sees not their dutances which are within, which are appointed by God as a spur to Felicity.*

*this*

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this

this happiness we cannot attain, unless we carry with us a great Stock of spiritual Preparations, such as a strong and an active Faith, with a Mind well furnish'd with wise, and good Considerations, of a deep, a large, and a retired Repentance, of an unrestrained Charity, of a confirmed Patience, and of a profound Submission to the Will of God, and a well-grounded Hope of a blessed Eternity: For if we are destitute of these, we cannot with so much fearlessness look Death in the face; but if those Graces are well-grounded in us, we shall go to our Grave with as much chearfulness of resolution, as the weary Labourer goes to take his natural Rest. Let no Man then presume upon a future Repentance, lest he should be hurried into endless Misery the very next Moment, and change his present Meriment into *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth*. How can any Man dare to presume to talk of repenting hereafter, when 'tis not in his power to command one Moment of future Time? Let him then whom God hath blessed with a clear Mind, or a quick Apprehension, make his application to God, by a severe, and a speedy Repentance, without which our future Happiness cannot be secure: And in order to this, 'tis very necessary to have always about us a presence of Mind, which will be to us as a constant Monitor to spur us on to good, and to avoid the contrary; this will make us firm and undaunted, in all good Purposes, and Actions; constantly placing our main Hopes on the other side the Grave, in the blessed Abodes of Pleasure and Tranquillity, till the great Day of our Coronation; when our Bodies shall be raised at the glorious Resurrection, and Body and Soul be re-united to live for ever in Bliss, and Glory; and this is a comfortable Motive to raise, and quicken our Hopes, and attract our Love to, and establish our Comfort in God, the Fountain of all our Happiness; by whom we are enabled to overcome the greatest Dangers, and with a brave Magnanimity despise all the Threat-

Threatnings of the most potent Adversaries, that  
falsly accuse our inoffensive Conversation; not suf-  
fering our selves to be overborn by any Difficulties,  
or Discouragements: For Duty belongs to us, but  
Events to God. The good Man will be industrious  
to gain his Favour, and Approbation; little regar-  
ding what harsh Treatments he meets with in the  
World, from perverse and sensual Men, who de-  
spise all things that have any Aspect to true Good-  
ness: God in his good time will commiserate the  
Afflicted, and when he sees meet will give them a  
speedy Deliverance, from all Anguish and Oppres-  
sion, his Goodness will hear our secret Moans, and  
compassionate us. The Wisdom of God can turn  
all our Crosses into proper Remedies, for the Di-  
seases of our Minds; and Will; if we be careful to  
remember; that God sent us into this World, not  
to do our own Will, but to suffer his. A true and  
quiet Submission hereunto

will preserve our † Honour  
even amidst our Enemies,  
which may excite, and ele-  
vate our Minds to the Ado-  
ration, and Praises of God,  
for his supporting Grace un-  
der all the Severities we meet  
with; when our Cause is ju-  
stifiable, and we suffer pa-  
tiently, being wronged and  
unjustly oppressed; because  
the wise God is pleased to  
exercise us hereby, then we  
suffer for Righteousness sake;  
for by Righteousness, Suffer-  
ings are made glorious.

† A good Man have in  
him much admirable  
Beauty, and Glory: He  
within himself contrai-  
neth a Nature very  
excellent, an immortal  
Soul, and an intelli-  
gent Mind, by which  
he nearly resembles  
God himself, and is  
comparable to Angels;  
he invisible is owner  
of Endowments, ren-  
dering him capable of  
the greatest and best  
Things: What are all  
outward things in com-

parison to Reason, to Wisdom, to Vertue, to Religion;  
which in despite of Misfortune he may have if he plea-  
ses? This man will not judge others but reform himself,  
and by example amend their Errors, and cast thoughts of  
kindness to all.



7. We should live the Life, as well as speak the Language of a Christian, otherwise our words will condemn our Actions, and rise up in Judgment against us; For though, our Saviour says, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*; yet this presupposes that the Actions should be agreeable to the Words; for the Heart is the principle Seat of Action; and says to the Hand, *Do this, and it doth it*; and to the other Faculties it carries the same Command, and requires the same Obedience. All great and holy Souls will have earnest Desires to contemplate, and embrace the Directions of a holy Heart; for this will direct to the Practice of the Christian Religion, in its original Beauty, and primitive Purity: This will lead us to the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God, and prevent the Spirit of God from withdrawing from us, that we be not left destitute of Divine Succor, by which our Graces shall be renewed Day, by Day, and we shall have a Spring of Auxiliary Grace to help us in time of need. If our ordinary or inherent Grace should chance to lye dormant, this will cause it to revive and live: If the Spirit of God do but whisper his Life-giving-comforts into our Breast, then we shall chuse rather to be the Object of his wounding Mercy, than of his sparing Cruelty; better is thy afflicting Mercy, than thy sparing Severity: These, when we are truly sanctified to receive them, can cure the Sin and Disease both together; and instead of Anguish and Sorrow, can procure Multiplicities of Celestial Joys, and Satisfaction; so preferable is a sanctified Life to all other things; in this Life though we have but little in hand, we have much in hope; our present Troubles will sweeten our future Joys; the Sorrows of this Life will give a lustre to the Glories of the next; that which is now hard to suffer will then be sweet to remember: God will turn all these Stones of Reprach, into precious Jewels to his People; because hereby they have brought forth more Fruit, and

and in his esteem are well liking; our Condition in this World be it what it will, if it be sanctified to us, will still be occasional Accidents of Blessings; whether it be Poverty or Disgrace; trouble or Sorrow; outward Blessings are oftentimes a Snare unto the Ungodly; as a Presage of their future Ruin. An Enemy may pluck my Heart out of my Body; but shall never remove Truth nor Goodness out of my Heart. The Primitive Worthies Professed; they would not take the whole World for one Leaf of the Bible; any one Truth of the Gospel is more worth than all the Inheritance upon Earth. These are the great Things of God's \* Law;

Heaven and Earth may sooner mingle, than he that truly fears God; wickedly depart from his Holy Laws; neither cast any of them behind his back: The Gospel and the Spirit, are to us upon Earth the Preludes and Supplies of Heaven. The true use of these will make every Man inwardly pure in Heart and Mind; the

*\* We look not upon any Doctrine to be of any moment that cannot be deduced from Scripture, but what we find therein; is a most excellent Rule of Righteousness; their Credibility is Prophetic, they contain all Truth.*

Holy Scripture is the Foundation of our Faith and the Rule of Religion; they brighten and adorn all that adhere to them; they are an Ornament to the Mind; they Imprint the Love of God in it: These shews us the Crown of Life, and puts it in our Power to take

it? † They fill us with joy in Spirit and Mind: These instructs us in the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the same Numerical Body we lay down at our Death. In

*† The same Body Numerically shall be restored again; such as no Infirmity can approach.*

fine, they plant in a Man Super-substantial Divine Principles; they prevent the Soul from sinking into

Pensive Heaviness, and establish our thoughts in the Truth; Whereby we see, that no Man is Self-sufficient, but must depend wholly upon God for Relief and Succour, to support us under all Difficulties: A Wise Man bears all things with an equal and a contented Mind, such as becomes Wisdom and Gravity; he is not over much depressed by Crosses, nor elevated by the unconstant Smiles of changeable Fortune, he will square his Life, Actions, and Desires, according to the Rules of right Reason, and rectifi'd or refined Nature, that which pleases true Reason, once pleases it for ever; the Man that true Reason have enlighten'd, will not repine at the Divine Goodness for every little thing that falls out contrary to his Expectation: This Man can convert that into Happiness, which others count Misery; he will give; and take to himself good Counsel before he presume to instruct others; 'tis never too late to learn, what it is always necessary to know; some Men greedily seek Death, though it be against their Wills, which is found every where, but a Prudent Man carries a full Treasure within him; he will not murmur at any thing that comes to pass by Gods Appointment, for the Publick Safety he is ready to Sacrifice his own; Man is compounded, his best part is his Mind; but the Almighty is all Mind, and all Reason; Truth lies deep, and must be rais'd up at leisure, some of them are accessible only to the Minds of Men, who are accomplish'd with Reason, by which they can admire him who is Immense, great without limits, who gives to a Man that is good in his sight, Wisdom, Knowledge and Joy, *Eccle. 21. 26.* God is strong in the behalf of them whose Heart is perfect towards him; Vain are all evil Attempts against him whom God will preserve; who shall be found Innocent in his sight. *Dan. 6. 21, 22.* Let then the Grace of Contentment, display it self in all our Deportment under

der every Grievance ; many Mercies may be produced out of this affliction ; one glimpse of God's Countenance, will abundantly recompense all Earthly Miseries : God is the Fountain of all Comfort ; if he be for us, who can be against us. All Comforts are ravishingly sweet that flow from him ; they will Nourish, Teach, and keep us, and fill us with the Taste of Divine Love, which consists not in bare Words, but in a quiet Submission to the Will of God in every Circumstance of Life, depending upon him for Deliverance out of every Grievance, assuredly knowing he will undertake for us ; who sees our Oppression, and guides us into all Truth : God will give the Reciprocal Testimony of his Love to this Man, which shall invigorate him with such a Power, as all the Malice

of Men shall not be able to overcome ; God will fight for him, and he shall hold his Peace, *Psal. 9. 9.* The Lord will be a Defence for the Oppressed ; even a Refuge in due time of Trouble : His

*\* God in Wisdom afflicts Men in time that he may spare them in Eternity ; His Will must be done and unrepiningly received by us, in the most severest Circumstances of Life.*

\* Justice also will break such as are Unjust in sunder. Mens † Words do not perish with the breath that uttered them, but leaves the Good of them for a Reward ; or the Evil of them to be punished by the God of

† *The lover of a Lye, is ranked in equal Guilt with the Maker of it. Rev. 21. 8, 27. ver.*

*He that believeth slayeth the Soul, and acts beyond the Cruelties of Death. He Robs the Innocent of Righteousness, and makes his Fame extinguish with Breath. 'Tis an infallible Aphorism upon all Occasions to speak the Truth ; he that understands amiss concludes worse ; a Man that propagates a Falsity, takes the Righteousness of the Righteous from him.*

Truth, who is a severe Judge to the Obstinate and Impenitent, but a Merciful and a Gracious Father to all that embrace the Dictates of his Holy Spirit, and who bring their Minds to a State of inward Quietness. \* These shall

*\* The Complaint of the Protestants in France. If we speak, we are sent to the Gallies; if we Write, we are Hanged; if we stand quiet, we are clapt up in the Inquisition; no Man have been so exquisite, but the vindictive have detracted from him; but however, he will still go on to amplify and encrease in that Wisdom, that is the fear of the Lord, and directs to the keeping his Commandments in which there is great delight.*

come out of the sharpest Tryals, victoriously a Frantick, outrageousness under Sufferings, is but widening the Wound, and causes it to bleed at a wider Orifice, when silent Submission makes half the Plaister that heals it up, to him who have his thoughts well digested, and his Will resigned to the Heavenly Powers: This Man's Deportment, scarce knows any Measures in obliging the World with Benefits, such a Man's Conversation has such an engaging Charm, that it cannot be resisted; so Celebrated is his Virtue, such a one can go and meet Death or Bonds with true greatness of Soul; and a

Magnanimous Mind; his Heart being inspired with Love and Mercy, having a native singleness in it, which aspires after Perfection, and the Wisdom of Conduct; in fine, he is a living Rarity, having a true tast of Goodness, he will never be weary in the Exercise thereof; his Pilgrimage here is noble, he is a reviving to all that love the Truth.

8. The Understanding is the guide of the Soul, when illuminated with Divine light: The Will generally follows the dictates of the Understanding; therefore if the Understanding be corrupt, we must needs wander out of our way. Reason ought



ought to be the judge of all our Actions. Instruct therefore your Judgment, and rectifie your Will, *Pro.* 23. 23. Then God will set his Love upon you, if you rightly know his Name, *Psal.* 19. 14. He will also deliver you, and bring you to honour, *ibid.* 92. even that honour that shall never fade nor dye, but remain when Time shall be no more; even that honour that will Intitle us to the dignity, of being the Friend of God, as faithful *Abraham* was, and to those Immaterial Glories which flow from the Fountain of uncreated Light. When we shall be permitted to contemplate that wonderful Clearness, which proceeds from the beatifical Visage of the supreme Creator. O desireable Mansion, one minutes Residence in thy Celestial Courts, will make us more than Recompence for all the afflictions we can possibly suffer in this Valley of Tears: Who would not aspire after such immence and inexpressible Felicity; it is an undeniable maxim, that all secular Felicities are built upon brittle Foundations. The most sublime terrestial Pleasures, even in their greatest complacencies, are but transcient Vanities, and conclude in Vexation: But the objects of the Celestial Habitations are refin'd to such an extraordinary degree of Perfection, that they will be able to satisfy the most extended desires of our capacious Souls. The full assurances of these Truths, should quicken our minds against the affects of Sin, and cause us to Fight under Christ's Banner, against the Enemies of the Apostolick Faith; and furnish us with a perpetual supply of noble and ardent desires, to run after the King of the above mention'd Country; i. e. the Deity inthron'd in Heaven, who will not remit the least Guilt to him that continues Impenitent. Fortifie us therefore, O Lord, against the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World; and elevate our thoughts to the sublime Contemplation of thy Glory, level in us every Arrogant Thought that

dares exalt it self against the Potency and Purity of thy Law. Sanctifie us for thy Self and Service, that the practick part of a Life of Sanctity may be our chiefest Imployment; by Faith let us fly from the Eye of this lower Orb, and take a prospect of thy heavenly Palace, and dwell there perpetually by heavenly Contemplation. Learn us to admire thy exalted Encomiums, which are Infinitely above all earthly Eloquence; the most that Human Race can imagine, is infinitely below thy deserved Lauds and Praises: What created Tongue can be able to comprehend or express thy ineffable Excellencies? In this Inferior Orb, the place of our Exilement, from that glorious Place. This World is a Theatre of inevitable Miseries; fortifie us therefore, O Lord, against the Poms and Vanities of it; that we may place our felicity in the full assurances of once beholding thy Face in Glory:

*\* A patient and constant endurance of Injuries and Affronts is to be preferred before a peevish and a haughty mind; it is an Argument of a noble mind to pardon, and a sign of a mean spirit to revenge; 'tis recorded of Julius Cæsar, that victorious Emperor of Rome, that he forgot nothing but Injuries, and shall a Heathen, under the Law of Nature surpass us in Clemency and Charity under the Law of Grace.*

When we shall receive a full recompence for all our sufferings, a recompence so incomparably glorious, and of such sublimity, that 'twill at once create and accomplish our Beatitude; our troubles are finite and endure but for a moment, but the Duration of our Bliss will be Infinite and Eternal; when we are entred into that Kingdom, where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes; and those chrystal drops which we have plentifully shed, in the prosecution of our Salvation, will be congeal'd into Pearls to enrich our Diadems, and embellish our Robes of Immorta-

mortality, where no Deluge of Sorrow shall disturb the Serenity of our Felicity; no Anxiety or Perplexity; no Discontent or Vexation shall intrude within the Limits of our Happiness; but we shall securely bath in Oceans of unmix'd Pleasure, and feast upon Delights; which know no Peril. Let then the Objects of the Earth be our Scorn and Derision, and the bright Splendor of Eternal Glory create our Ambition to serve thee truly all the Days of our \* Banishment; that when we are withdrawn from the Habitation of the Flesh, we may be presently carry'd to Heavenly recompence, and enjoy those beatick Pleasures, which have been described to us by so many Divine Messengers, sent by Providence; to bring Messages from Heaven, to which our † Faith can even now carry us into a pleasant Ive, which may enable us to overcome all Obstacles that shall interrupt us in our holy Race; we are then to recollect our Thoughts, and lodge them in Heaven, and so subdue our Minds and Bodies, that both may become of a Divine Temper, and so qualified for the future World; that Death may only be our Pass-port to Happiness, to prepare for, which is the best Philosophy we can study upon Earth; gain Profelytes to Righteousness, and to win to themselves a true Passage to Felicity.

*\* A Mind that is surfeited with the Glories of this World, will seek for quiet in a private Cell; where it may acquire the Perfection of Virtue.*

*† Faith can carry us above and beyond all Doubts; it can enable a Man to glorifie God by dying for the Truth. Good Works are a sure Indication of a good Faith; but a Defect of Actions shews the Defect of Faith: Truth fails not of Victory, it encreases. Faith, which is a firm Assnt to supernatural Truths: Whoever have it in a right manner, is able by God's Assistance to*

this is Wisdom and true Understanding; 'twill engage God, in our Defence, to deliver us from Falshood and Wrong; and esteem us dear in his sight: He is our Defence and Hope, and will be our Guide until Death; *Psal.* 48. 14. As his Wisdom have invincibly promised in his holy Oracles, wherein we have his declared Mind; that informs us, sin covered with silence is a Disease incurable, till confessed and forsaken; for he have ill repented whose sins are repeated and denyed: But he that confesses and forsakes his sin, is promised Mercy and Acceptance, even by Divine Truth; he that confesses and forsakes his sins, Mercy meets his Confession with a full and a free Pardon, and Supplies of Grace and Strength to walk in new Obedience; which like Patience proves a Cordial to the Heart: There can be no greater comfort than to walk in newness of Life; this brings a fruitful Harvest of Content, and will register the whole Man in the Book of Life, and perfume his Name to all Posterity in the Records of Honour. If his Mind in this Life shines with the true Light of Wisdom, and his will be conformable to the Will of God, in gladly doing, and patiently suffering whatsoever his Wisdom shall please to call him to; He is content to live as a Pilgrim among Enemies, and receive, instead of the Honour due to true Vertue, Contempt and Reproach; having the Blessing of perfect Beatitude of Soul, which frees him from mean and base Servitude, depending still upon God in all Events, be the Success of Affairs what they will; whom to serve in Truth and Uprightness is to reign, *i. e.* to be here a true Son of Grace, and hereafter an Heir of Glory; still in this Life preserving his Soul unspotted from the Corruptions of the World; that he at no time be found unqualified for the Garden of Delights; but being blessed with saving Grace, he may always have on him the Wedding-garment of Righteousness;

special

special Endowments of Body and Soul, a holy and religious Courage to persist in Goodness; notwithstanding all opposition to the contrary, looking upon all things in subordination to the Love of God. We must not then unmeasurably grieve for the Loss of any thing, but chearfully resign our dearest Comforts to God, who art the Father of our Spirit, to whom we sue for Assistance, to proceed in all good and holy Works, and overcome all the unbridled Desires of our Hearts, and subdue all the Pleasures of Sense and Taste, and give our selves up to the Conduct of Reason; that we may possess our Souls in patience under every Affliction, and be full of Mildness and Lenity towards others; by which we shall embalm and preserve the Life of our own Soul. But herein we must first observe, that we must first renounce our own Will, before we can intirely submit to the Will of Christ, the Celestial Orbs; Do not resist the Angels that move them; we must then disband our own Desires, before we can intirely be what God requires us to be, and before we can be possessed of that Ocean of Comfort, which is freely extended to all that are true of Heart; whose Mind is ennobled, and Soul enlarged to seek after unseen Treasure, by Felicity of Thought, that is inflamed with a lasting Desire of Glory and Renown; procuring to the Soul a Paradise of Thoughts, and a Heaven of Desires, that quells all the Storms and Fury of the Mind; So that Envy and Hatred cannot take root in such a Heart; but Love will rule the Thoughts, and altogether dispose the Actions, that sin shall not invade nor bereave it of Glory: But, such a Man shall be a shining Example of Religion and Vertue, and by the Exercise of these acquire to himself Immortal Honour; which will add a Lustre to his Name, beyond all the Titles and Characters in the World.



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\* 'Tis madness to doat upon our future Repentance; we are not certain that we shall live till to Morrow: Why then do we defer our Repentance till to Morrow, the whole Life of a Christian, is called one continued Act of Repentance; true Repentance is a Motion of the Heart, kindled by the Holy Ghost, by which a Man cometh to the Knowledge of his sins, and is sensible of the Wrath of God due to him for the commotion of them.

9. \* True Repentance is never too late, but late Repentance is seldom true: A Sick-bed Repentance too often vanishes with the Disease; all sins will be pardoned to the real Penitents, and to such as have recourse to Christ by a lively Faith. True Faith is necessary in order to a good Life, and a good Life is the genuine Product of a right Belief; therefore the one never ought to be pressed to the prejudice of the other: Faith and a good Life are so far from clashing with one another, that the Christian Religion have made them inseparable: Whoever have these in a right manner will live to God, and to the purposes of his Glory, that they may stand right in his recovered Favour. Repentance carries with it a Divine Rhetorick, and Faith gives one an insight into the future World, and now foresees the Resurrection of his own, and all other Bodies; he knows that as Christ is risen, so all they that bear on them Christ's Image, is, or may be fully assured they shall rise, when the Dead shall awake, and the Earth give up her Dead; as the Prophet *Isaiah* prophesied, *ch. 26. 19.* Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead Body shall they arise: awake and sing ye that dwell in Dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead. The Earth also shall disclose her Blood, and shall no more cover her slain; but in the mean time, *i. e.* from the time of the Soul's departure from the Body, till the Resurrection-day, the Soul must dwell in the Mansions of a new

new World, far remote from this; wherein every thing will be strange, wonderful, unalterable, and eternal, where the Soul

\* will be no more liable to the Inconveniencies that now attend it, while it is imprisoned in the Body; for as now, while it is in the Body, it is not liable to the Injuries of a Disease, or the Violence committed on the Body; so then it will be

*\* The Soul of one virtuous, religious Man is of greater worth and excellency than the Sun, and its Planets; such is the Dignity of an intelligent Being.*

unalterably happy, where no Torments can touch it; but 'twill be possessed of endless Joys, where nothing can interrupt it in the praising and glorifying God; when the Soul will have no Affinity to any visible matter, but will altogether converse with Saints and Angels, joyning with them in the Glorification of the great Creator; where we shall behold him face to face, and gaze our fill upon his adorable Glory: Though now we may not stare upon this Majesty, lest we be blinded by the Shine of it: Its brightness is so much above our narrow Measures of Preceptions; yet its brightness fills us with unconceivable Perfection of Joy and Bliss, which is as 'twere a fore Taste of that Happiness we are aspiring after: As our Spirits subsist without Food, Rayment, Sleep, know no Latitude, or Pain; so our Bodies after the Resurrection shall be above these Necessities, and all Distempers, for we shall be as the Angels of God, *St. Matth. 22. 30.* our Soul is the Treasure of Goodness, and endewed with many Excellencies, constantly nourished with God's Mercy. He that would be an Inhabitant amongst the Spirits of the Just, must discipline his own to the same Uniformity, and convert his Body to a Temple, where his Heart must be both Altar, and Sacrifice, the stately Mansion-house of Life must be converted into a Mansion of Divine Love, and the

the magnificent Palace of Heroick Spirits of a Royal Court of peculiar Graces; and then that

*\* The Soul never dies nor sleeps; but lives for ever: 'Tis the Royalty of Heaven.*

part of us which <sup>\*</sup> lives first, and dies last, will not be liable to Mortality. Our Bosoms must be converted to Closets of Devotion, and our Hearts Cabinets of immacu-

late Innocency and fervent Prayers; this will adorn our Hearts with the white Robes of Humility, and crown it with the Diadem of Divine Love; then Bounty and Goodness shall inhabit in our Breast; our Minds shall not be impoverished, nor our Station miserable, nor any of the Graces strangers to us; we shall no longer prefer the Miseries of this transitory World, before the real Joys of a solid Eternity. Seeing the best of Earth's Enjoyments is but a Theatre of inevitable Miseries; Earth is the Place of our Exilement from Heaven, wherein we are insecure of every good; but in Heaven dwells all true Felicity, inviting then is that Happiness we hope there to be possess of; there is Society worth dying for; Death † will trans-

*† When death hath closed our Eyes, we shall have no visible Objects, nor visive Organs; the longest life of the most durable Creature is but as a Moment in comparison of Eternity; when the Body is dead the Soul will loose nothing of the quickness and sagacity it now has;*

state us into an Eternal Possession of all desirable good, and sets us beyond the reach both of Time and Chance, and puts us into a State of Happiness that admits of no Change or Interruption; that is not to be measured by Hours or Moments, by Years or Centuries. Let our Souls therefore breath and pant after this Felicity;

*then our Vertue next to Christ's Atonement will be our best Advocate when we are entered into a vast Eternity.*

that



that we may pass from his Ordinances into his presence: In order hereunto, let us revere his Ministers, admire his Word, and adore his Majesty, who is one Substante in three Substances, one Essence in three Relations; Father, Son, and sacred Spirit; who freely offers to every true Penitent divine forgiveness. God is the final Cause of the Universe in respect of his Goodness, the exemplary Cause in respect of his Wisdom, and the efficient Cause in respect of his Power, therefore the Glory of God is the ultimate and chief End of the Creation, and the good of Men is the mediate and secondary End. Man's chief business therefore should be to study the Glory of God, and do nothing that is forbidden by his Prohibitions; the Laws of true Religion do proclaim that all things have their Being and Existence, and are solely governed by the Providence of God. Now God's divine Providence consisteth in these three things; his Fore-knowledge, his Purpose, and his Administring and Governing all things. In the Providence of God we must consider his Knowledge directing, his Will commanding, and his Power executing: His Knowledge is a most clear sight of all things past, present, and to come. God is fixt, stable, and immoveable, not successive; his high Majesty be-holdeth all things clearly, altogether all at once; to him all things are present, and as he foreseeth all things, so he foreseeth the Causes of all things. God is a most perfect and pure Being; therefore 'tis impossible for him in any thing to be deficient, or any way the Cause of Evil, though he foreknows all the Evil that will befall the Sons of Men, and causes Good to be deduced out of them: God openeth the Heart of Man at his conversion, he soften it, and circumcises it, and renews it, and poureth the Oyl of Mercy into it; if it be prepared with Humility and Contrition to receive it. The Spirit of God kindles new  
Moti-

Motions of Love and Obedience in the regenerate Heart, and influences it with his Grace, making it fruitful in all good Works, that by Integrity it may endeavour to be preserved sinless, seeing the sins of Men were the procuring or meritorious Cause of the suffering of the second Person of the Holy Trinity; and that which gave the sharpness to them, the true sense of this should quicken and increase in us all requisite Graces, and establish our Comfort in all Good, since the Son of God have done such great things for us; to consider which are the effect of a gallant and brave Spirit, and will be shown by inward Holiness, and outward Sanctity, and make us kind to all, even to the Enemies of our Life; since Jesus Christ became our friend in procuring Eternal Life for us while we were his Enemies; the thoughts that Christ died for us should so soften and melt us into Love, that we should be ready to rescue all from Misery; this is shewing Love to him who is infinitely lovely in himself, when we shew it to his *Members*; for what is shewed to them is shewed to him; in that ye have done it to the least of these, ye have done it unto me, to him who is the God of Love, 1 St. John 4. 9. to consider which should re-inkindle our Love to one another, for his sake who is the God of Spirits, and gave being to our immortal Souls, and gives us as 'twere a new Being every moment, by continuing our Life, and Duration, by that Almighty Will; whereby he effected our first Production, and endued us with the Beauty of that Divine Light, which we call Reason; and have made us capable and desirous of enjoying him, the first and chief Cause of all good; to whom we may at all times repose our grief, and be confident of relief for the same, which may allure our Minds to a delight of that which is only capable of rendring the Troubles of Life easie in this World, and the Soul happy in the other.

10. Vertue yields a most fruitful Harvest of Content; an inoffensive Life gives a Man an undeniable pretension to the Crown of Glory. If Innocency be the Robe of Heaven; who then would not diligently strive to be adorn'd with Purity? We must therefore be vigilant, and solicitous, that we defile not our Body, nor our Mind. He that would be a true Disciple of Christ's, must wear his *Li-*very of Sanctity, and Chastity: The Chastity of the Body, and the Sanctity of the Soul, are said to be the two Keys of Religion, and Felicity: He does not rightly believe in Jesus, that does not express his Belief by the Piety of his Life, and sanctified Affections of Love to him.

*\* Vertue is the ground of Peace, the link of Unity; it increases Faith and Hope; and is a fair step towards Martyrdom: Obedience is the best of Sacrifices.*

Charity is the Seminary of all Vertues, and nothing can be of mature growth which proceeds not from that Root; it is this that prepares Heaven for us, that makes us survive our Monuments, and become immortal in our Graves, and promises Eternity to our Dust and Ashes: this is the way to consummate Happiness: Faith is the Victory that overcomes the World; but let us not mistake the Symbol for the thing. Fix not the Magnitude of thy Faith on the greatness of thy Work, but on the Merit of him who accepts thee in the beloved, or in the Merit of his Love; this is free astonishing, and wonderful, to each awakened Mind, which is full of God and of the Sense of his Love to lapsed Mankind, who had been Eternally miserable, had not the Merits of Christ intervened. Let then a fountain of Tears flow from each sensible Heart, at the thoughts of such superabundant Mercy, so miraculously wrought for every true Believer; this is above and beyond the Conceptions

tions of humane Reason; this is what the Angels desired to look into, *Heb. 2. 16.* Let each aspiring Soul here behold, with what wonderful humility our Saviour hath allayed the Pride of haughty Man,

*\* The Death of the Son of God, and the Comforts of the holy Spirit is the nourishment of our Souls; we are then to receive with a lively Faith all the Truths which the Gospel points out to us: Herein we discover the Fountain of all Joys, since Jesus Christ have given a plenary satisfaction to the Divine Justice for the offences of Mankind. If they qualify themselves to receive pardon, which must be done by true Repentance immediately; because when Life ceases, the opportunity of Repentance ceases also, for which cause Repentance must not be put off one Minute.*

that he hath \* shed his dearest Blood to ransom him from the Jaws of Misery, and endless Woes: Here we may see the detestableness of sin; that nothing less than so infinite a Prize could expell the Poyson of it. He that trusts to the Merits of his own Illustration, will infallibly lose Heaven, and these Eternal Joys which an humble assurance doth procure. May we not therefore live like those, whose exterior part is all their principle of Religion; nor neglect our immortal part, that Spring of Life, that inhabits in us; but when we approach to the Throne of God, be filled with Divine greatness, which will derive to us Rivers of Comfort, springing from a well-chosen Conversation, by which the Mind is improved; no Man is miserable that suffers with submission to the Will of God; the

Martyrs have demonstrated to us, that an Heart that loveth God, may retain Peace and Joy upon the Wrack, and in the midst of Flames; the Joy they found in God supported them under all; the most violent Evils have some Intervals, and Intermissions; only in Hell, pain have no abatement;

ment; where the Reprobate never want cause to upbraid themselves, that they might have been saved, if they would have followed the righteous Laws of God. Is there such pleasures in sin, as to venture the Eternal displeasure of God, by the Commission of it? Every wise Man will break off his sins by Repentance, and by shewing Mercy to the Poor, and by turning to God with all his Heart, with all his Soul, and with all his Strength? If a Man will go on in sin, and indulge himself in sinful Pleasures; he must expect to reap the Fruit thereof, which is Eternal Death, without a speedy Reformation, and turning to God with all his Might. If a Man will not reform till he is weary of sinful Pleasures, he bids defiance to Heaven and Happiness, and puts the Day of Grace far from him: To a vitious Man the enjoyment of pleasures rather kindles, than extinguishes the Desire of them; so that if he will venture upon indulging himself in sinful Delights, he must expect to receive the Rewards hereof, to wit, Eternal Punishments: Eternal Death is the dearly earned Wages of sin, *The wages of sin is death*, Rom. 6. 23. i. e. the persisting in it, and pursuing it, without retreat. He that loveth Life will hate Vice, and cleave to Vertue, with full purpose of Heart, and joyce in God, and in the Comforts he finds from the Influences of his holy Spirit; a wise Man will not suffer the Battery \* of an Enemy to prejudice his patience, but will take courage in God, and in the comforts of his holy Word, from whence he shall derive; such strength as shall make him act in every point like a Christian; by the strength of Grace he shall be enabled to walk in all the paths of Vertue,

*\* If your Actions proceed from a defensible Cause, fear not: Tho' Heaven and Earth be moved, the Majesty thereof dwelleth in his Throne immovable, to rescue them who are condemned without just Evidence.*

which



which are lovely both in Quality and Object, there is something in Vertue that makes it venerable; 'tis amiable, a good Life embalms a Man's memory; makes it immortal: But sin debases, disgraces, and defaces the Soul; it sets God and Man at variance, and Man and Man at defiance; the Lye of one whose Body is turned into Dust, is able to set a City on a flame, and to set the dearest Friends at variance; wherefore the good Word of God hath with invincible Reason said, *Whosoever loves or makes a Lye, shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: A Lyar countermines the Rule of Christian Practice, and sets Heaven at defiance; he plots his own Eternal Ruine. A Lyar will sin for the love of Misery, having no invitation to decoy him to it; only, because 'tis forbidden: He puts far from him the consideration, that it is always destructive in the End. Sin was once a Post-house walked in darkness, but now Men are not ashamed to commit it, even in the light; though every Truth assures them 'tis destructive. Sin is of a viperous Off-spring, its Descent is from Hell, and to that dismal place it will drag the Sinner; there is nothing in sin that can in reason so much as appear eligible, but Men disguise it, and put a false varnish on it: few Men love Evil, as it appears Evil, but under the pretence of some seeming Pleasure, or good in it; it presents to the view a false present Happiness; it promises Milk in a lordly Dish; though instead thereof it gives a nail in the Temple, *Judges 4. ch. 21. v. 22.* Nothing can be the object of choice, but what is good, or appears to be so; Vertue is truly pleasant in the way, and in the End. Let not Anger get the

*\*We should in all things be animated by a principle of Reason, and be conducted by Religion; this is the only warrantable governing Principle that diverts us from a narrow and ungenerous Mind; otherwise if we accidentally do good it may be without principle or merit.*

strive to be as free from Passion as brutish Men are from Civility: Sink not under the Dollars of discontent, keep the Mind from commotion, be patient under undeserved Misery, lest the Animal unhappily rule the Man: For if Nature rule instead of Reason, what can be expected but that the Will should be excentrick, and all in disorder and confusion? But Love is the vital Spirit of Religion, it causes a reciprocal Amity betwixt Man and Man, Friend and Friend; it makes the Soul all Joy, all Peace; and Delight, according to *Solomon*; the Righteous is satisfied from himself. This Man is always preserved by God's ever-waking Providence, and guarded by the blessed Angels, and is constantly replenished with Joy in the Holy Ghost: He remits all his Affairs to God, as well his Life and Reputation, as the means of Life; as assuredly knowing that he, who in the last Day, will most certainly raise our Bodies from the Grave, will as sure in his good time grant in this Life a Resurrection to thy good Name, from the strife and abuses of false and slanderous Tongues. God's grace is abundantly able to sweeten our Troubles; that Grace that makes Duties agreeable, and Difficulties easie, which causes us to forget our Enmities, and imbrace our Enemies by the Power of that Love, which he is pleased to shed abroad in our Hearts, by which we pray for; shew kindness, and wish well to all; and thus a wise Man is magnified by his Trials, by which his Thoughts and Purposes are made manifest; though God sees every inclination of a Man in the Seed, and every Grace in the habit of the Mind; yea, every Vertue in the Root; yet by Trials a Man comes the better to know himself, and to depend more upon the Righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth; who have graciously promised to stand by the oppressed, and make them above the Accidents of Life, if we are hated for our Vertue, and exposed for doing our duty; a wise Man will uncomplainingly bear it,  
know-

knowing this have been the Lot of the best of Men, who have gloried in Persecutions, and despised Contempt; the proof our Integrity rises in proportion to the Trial; the greater our sufferings are, the greater is our constancy; the greater our resignation, the greater will be our reward; God have promised to help them to right, who suffer wrong, *Psal. 74. 23.* whether it be in their goods, or good Name: He can restore it to them Seven-fold, at least, in the noble Scenes of the other World: Besides, to suffer cheerfully abates the Anguish, and adds strength and lustre to the Vertue, to be able to abide the stroke, has a great deal of pleasure as well as trouble in it: By this means a Man becomes conscious of his own strength, and finds his Vertue hightned beyond an ordinary Temper, which could not have been known without Experiment, and surely such a Discovery must be extreamply entertaining to a generous Mind, and afford a very relishing satisfaction.

*The All-piercing Eye of the Eternal Judge, beholdeth all things visible and invisible.*

1. **T**H E Heart or the Mind of a wise Man, is always settled upon God; he looks upon himself as always in his Presence, whose Bounty is super-excellent, and whose Omnipotency is present every where, and beholdeth whatsoever thou dost any where: We can do nothing but what we do before the Eyes of our Judge, which seeth not only our Actions, but our Thoughts, which he knoweth a far off, before we our selves know them. Yet while we do that which is

*|| We should chuse rather to be little in our Fortune than Actions, and prefer true Honour before our Ease, and anxiously dread nothing but God's displeasure, trusting our Lives and Fortunes to his pleasure and providence, renouncing our own conduct to be governed by his.*

who

who have abundantly encouraged all the Workers of good to rejoyce in the Truth; when a Man's ways please the Lord, he will turn his Losses into gain, his Poverty into plenty, his Want into wealth, his Sorrow into joy; if not in the literal, yet in a spiritual Sense: God in his super-abundant Wisdom governs all things, which he created with a Word; Let it be, was sufficient for the production of every thing; which creating Word governs all things by his Omnipotent power, and have instamped upon each holy Soul, that loves and fears him, a super-excellent Lustre. The mind of Man is said to be the Image of God, in which are these three things, Memory, Understanding, and Will, or Love: We attribute to the Memory all that we know, and we attribute to the Understanding the knowledge of all uniting Truths that we find agreeable to each other, and to the Will the desire of admiring and loving God: by Memory we are said to be like God the Father, by Understanding to God the Son, by Will to resemble the sanctifying Spirit: To live by the Conduct of these will makes us good proficients in three things, which are very necessary. First, we shall understand with Discretion, act and speak with Prudence, and obey in all things our great Creator with alacrity, with our utmost vigour and activity, lest we should omit to do these things; let us calculate once a Day our Thoughts, that we may always entertain good ones, and return due Praises to our Maker, for the instilling them into our Minds; for good Thoughts, if well employed, are a good Conduct to steer our Actions by. † Contemplate on God's

Justice and Mercy together; † *It well befits us to put our minds into a posture of thought, that we be serious and recollected, that we may be found able to make a noble stand in the Defence of Justice and Truth.*

thy

thy Thoughts, the thoughts of his Justice will preserve thee from provoking him, and the remembrance of his Mercy will cause thee to fly to him in all necessity and distress: By this means thou wilt possess the Testimony of a good Conscience, and the assurance of God's Favour; seeing his Mercy and Immenſity is transcendent: No ſin is of that extent, or equivalent to the Mercy of God, or the Merits of Chriſt; all Actions of the Creature are finite, but the Mercy of the Creator, and the Merits of our Saviour are infinite; there is no ſin too big for God's Mercy to pardon upon true Repentance, and turning from it, which is the condition of Life: The want of Grace cannot be diſcerned by any thing but Grace; haſt thou a hearty deſire that thy wants of Grace ſhould be ſupplied, then that holy Ambition is Grace it ſelf, without which thou couldeſt not deſire it? God will never deſert that Soul which earneſtly and heartily deſires him, and his ſaving health; none can hunger for Grace but he that ſubſiſteth by it. God

*¶ God is moſt affected with Mercy, when he ſees Man moſt afflicted with Miſery; the greater the ſenſe of ſin is, the greater is the ſincerity of Repentance.*

will make theſe ¶ earneſt deſires of thine to operate for the beſt to thee; God will ſend the affluence of Grace into thy Soul; 'twill operate in thy Soul a true deteſtation of all ſin, and an earneſt Love to all good: by this thou ſhalt ſafely arrive to the glorious Luſtre of

endleſs Happineſs, by his Aſſiſtance who ſits in the Heavens, deriding the Thoughts of the vain, but ſupporting the Hopes of the humble, and of him

who is little † in his own ſight, and not full of himſelf:

*† An humble Man will ſuffer God's pleaſure chearfully, which*

*chearful Submission abates the Anguiſh, and adds Strength and Luſtre to the Pertur.*

ſenſe



tense sorrow of the Soul, a weak Confidence, and an enfebled Life of the Spirit, which cannot perceive it self in the Favour of God, for which 'tis filled with fears and doubts, as if 'twere forsaken by him who have compassion on all things; but these are causeless fears, having no true ground for them; however, 'tis an affliction of that Magnitude, that it exceeds all other Temporal sorrow; 'tis compared to the Miseries of the unseen World, 'tis an internal grief, and no external means can cure it, the Application must be spiritual, of a divine Nature descending from above: To wit, Faith in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ, who is the only Curer of all our Wounds and Maladies; to him will I look who is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembles at my Word: God will one Day crown the patience, and constancy of these whom he esteems his Friends, with Eternal life; in the mean time, he will virtually assist them with his Holy Spirit, and enable them to overcome all their doubts and fears, if they depend on his Almighty power, in well-doing, and patient suffering: God at last will fulfil the Desires of the aspiring Soul, which is to satisfy it with that Life, which have no end; he will make them sensible, that even now, in this Life, they shall have in themselves a Fountain of comfort, a Well of perpetual Refreshment springing up into everlasting Life: God will give them Divine Illumination, he will make their Souls victorious, and place on their Heads a Royal Crown, which they shall wear when time shall be no more; their Heads will be Eternally honoured with it, and this is a Celestial and Divine Aspect, the firm Assurance of this makes us more than humane, by worthy and heroick Actions.

2. Let neither thy Eye nor thy Thought be fixt on that which breedeth a sinful Delight, for whosoever delighteth in sin, is the servant of sin, a slave and a vassal to it: It is an intolerable Yoke, a heavy Burthen

Burthen to bear ; confels therefore thy sins to God, and immediately forsake them ; the acknowledgement of sin is said to be the beginning of Salvation, that is, if they are acknowledged with a Detestation of them, and of our selves, for having been guilty of them, and with a resolution never to be guilty of the repetition of them. Transact nothing which must cost thee a bitter Repentance, for God's Wisdom is immutable, and cannot pardon until the sinner be qualified by Repentance,

*¶ He that serves a good Cause out of a mercenary View, 'tis provable will engage in an ill one, when he believes it in the same thriving condition.*

and by ¶ renouncing his own Conduct, and depending intirely upon God, whose Mercies cannot fail to pardon, whensoever a sinner does truly and sincerely repent, and forsake his sins ; but he that resolves to sin, and yet presumes to invoke the Almighty

to be merciful, does, in effect, beseech God to unthrone himself of his Justice, while he importunes him to be indulgent to an impenitent Sinner, who still resolves to go on in his former Carreer, and will not break off his sins by Repentance, nor lay hold on that Vertue which is infused into his Heart, by God's Holy Spirit, who freely offers sufficient Grace to all, if they would lay hold of it while the Season of Grace lasts. Let therefore thy Repentance be speedy, that sin take no Root in thy Heart ; place thy sorrow upon sin which is the right Object ; let not thy grief for any thing but sin be exorbitant ; prudent Minds are composed to endure, and make good use of sorrow ; let every distress awaken thy Mind to fly to thy Redeemer, and open to thee a way to the promised Land ; 'twill lead thee to the Treasure of God's inestimable Mercy : This will give thee peace of consciences, and cheerful access to God ; by this thou wilt have calm Affections, and be made fit for God's Service, by purity of Heart : Let no sin have  
Root,

Root, or hide it self in thy Heart, by reason of the Deceitfulness, or Treachery of it, but let the quickness of thought discover it, and banish it out of thy Mind, with all its Vanity and Exorbitancy; and in the room thereof implant in thy Soul magnanimous and good Desires, such as may fill thee with holy Considerations to remember, whence thou comest, and whether thou art going; and this will make thee so composed, that thou wilt be always ready rather with Wisdom to bear an Injury, than to retaliate it; chusing rather with Meekness to suffer, than with Anger to return it: Be angry with nothing but Evil, and make a right use of Injuries: Let them be so many Exercises to thy Wisdom, Meekness, and Patience, so shalt thou reap Benefit from the Malice of thine Enemies, and make some good use even of the malicious Arrows they shoot at thee, by the wise use of their Evil-dealings towards thee, thou mayest conquer thy self, which is as great a Vertue, as to encounter with the fiercest Lion; he that hath vanquished his Anger, hath gained the Victory over a dangerous Enemy. Allay and overcome thy Anger with reason, that chasing it with due Revenge, it may prove Justices hand-maid, not its Mistress. Suffer not thy Anger to be of a long Duration, lest it engender into Malice, but reduce all the ill-treatment you meet with into Good; Practice; Patience, and Mildness will leave better Impressions, than the best Precepts sown in Storms: Anger makes thee assume the shape of an unjust Judge, while thou correctest anothers fault, by a greater of that of thy own, by shewing a furious Impatience.

† Envy is a perverse Distemper of a di-

† Envy is an implacable Sentiment; you may impose silence upon it

by your good Deeds, and by your Civilities, but you shall not bend it, 'twill live as long as your Merit shall subsist; 'twill pardon your Infelicities: Time will efface the remembrance, but 'twill never forgive your good Qualities.

seased Mind: 'Tis not only afflicted with its own Misfortune, but 'tis disquieted at others Exhilaration, whatsoever is a Pleasure to others, is a Torment to the envious Man: He therefore that gives himself up to Envy, merits to himself Divine Revenge; the envious is always ready to blast his innocent Neighbour's Reputation. Historians tell us of some Countries free from Serpents, but who can inform us of any Town or City barren of Envy? I fear it is the common Pest that visits all places, and is the sole Cause of many heavy Hearts, and weeping Eyes: Let therefore thy Mind be composed in all the unhappy, and unexpected Events that shall beset thee; and let no vain Thoughts have any abiding in thee, but remit all thy Affairs to God, who best knows what Treatment is meetest for thee: 'Twill be more beneficial for thee to overcome thine own Mind, than all thy Enemies, if thy own Affections betray thee not, nothing can injure thee; 'tis the well disposition of thy Mind that makes thee rich or happy, miserable or destitute: Let no vanity or exorbitancy of Thought have any abiding in thee; discipline thy self in God's School, for there is the best and safest Cure of Emulation: A fixt and stable Mind will be contented every where; he that bears about him such a Mind is become a proficient, and have learnt how to demean himself wisely, and is able by prudent Example to illuminate others, by the shine and lustre of his own Actions.

3. He that would be renowned for Abilities of Mind, must cherish all good Motions, if he would attain any Maturity of Perfection. A Universal Ho-

liness is absolutely necessary to  
Eternal Life, the principal  
Movements of growth in  
Grace, are nothing less than

\* *The love of esteem is  
no more than the love  
of pleasure; therefore  
it is a means which God  
makes use of to carry us to Vertue, and to the good of  
Society.*

the

the Cement of Eternal Glory, a Prize that will answer the cost of our severest Meditations, and earnest Endeavours: God rewards an extraordinary Improvement of common Grace, with Additions of greater spiritual Strength, in proportion to the said improvement; so that none shall take them out of the Father's hands, who is above all: Bad Spirits, by all their bartry, are not able to overthrow the Faith of a good

Christian, his \* Soul being a Divine Guest sent from Heaven: Could we but behold it in its brightest Lustre, we should see there is no created Beauty, no Embellishment on Earth so glorious: He that considers the value of it, have a magnanimous and

*\* The Immortality of the Soul is as certain as the Existence of the Body; though length, breadth, size, figure, hardness, softness, do not enter into the Conception of the Soul.*

a good Mind, than which inhuman Possessions; there is nothing more great or excellent. The richest Treasures of Princes can afford them nothing better than Tranquility of Mind: An understanding Heart is the inward Illumination of the Soul, which God beholds, and regards according to the Integrity thereof: Thou must be pure in Heart if ever thou mean'st to see God: Calm Affections are fit for God's Service. Let no inferior Love or Delight allure us from God, who is perfect Love. When God is our chief Love and Delight, we shall have Felicity in all that is subordinate, while we continue in well-doing: In true Tranquility of Conscience, the Heart is cheerful in every Estate and Condition, dreading no Judge, nor Witness: A good Conscience is a continual Feast, the Soul's Paradise, the Mind's fair Heaven: 'Tis a Divine internal Light, which we cannot, but by the Commotion of sin extinguish; the Conscience is a supream Court of Judicature within us, and about us; it is a silent Register of our Thoughts, and Words: A good Conscience is to be



esteemed before all other Treasures on this side Heaven; the Heart of a Man that is right towards God, is the greatest Treasure upon Earth; 'tis a Paradise of Delight, under the Sun; nothing is more excellent then the Heart of Man, when 'tis given up to God, and devoted to him; then it becomes noble, and in some faint measures like him: A Man that is truly in the Favour of Heaven, is said to carry a Heaven within him, and enjoys a pleasant Paradise of Eternal Delights; he is totally replenished with never-decaying Joy, and hereafter he shall be possessed with endless Delights, and everlasting Felicity: They shall partake of Christ's Joy, who have boar a share in his Sufferings: The well-bearing of Injuries may contribute to our Happiness; in every Affliction, remember that God beholdeth thee, and his Providence will give the Issue with the Trial: Learn to obtain a faithful Dependance upon God's Providence, in the most afflicting Circumstances of Life; this is pleasing to the Spirit of God. Is thy Fortune slender, contract thy Mind within its limits, which is to Necessity, not Opinion? what can the richest Treasures of Princes afford them, more than Tranquility of Mind. They are not miserable whose sufferings are ample; consider the extent of thy Sufferings; perhaps thou art envied without Cause; thou owest thanks to God for that conformity to his dear Son; this may redound the more to illustrate thy glory: God's grace can make thee invincible, he views thy Trials with delight, and has a proportionable Reward always in reserve for thee. God will not expose thee to an unequal conflict, God would not hazard us, if he were not certain we should gain the Conquest; God would not venture us in the Lists without his Grace, which is able to win the Crown for us, his fatherly Corrections are the products of his Love, and Wisdom, for our amendment: All earthly Sweets must be mixt with bitter; calamity is often the

the Discipline of Vertue, let us not be averse to the Antidote; all impatience receives its Nativity from the Enemy of Souls, who conspires by all unreasonable Arts to ruine the Soul of Man, and to plunge him into the pit of despair; strive therefore in storms of misery to calm thy mind, and be patient under every affliction, the Adversary of Souls envies the Image of God in Man, and is displeased when God bestows his Favours in general, or particular on him, and all who act by this rule are too near alied to his pernicious Spirit, such a Man mourns when others rejoyce, this is the most that Envy can acquire towards its own satisfaction, to hurt others temporally with its own Eternal Destruction of Soul and Body; but with this dear bought Prize the envious Man cannot prevent the All-seeing Wisdom, from blessing and directing the righteous Man, who will still be happy; notwithstanding the evil Man will still envy his Felicity: Envy is disquieted at the Exhilaration of the good Man; Envy preys upon the mind that entertains it, is more miserable than can be expressed, for it is not only afflicted with its own misfortunes, but is disquieted at the happiness of others; whatsoever is pleasant to others is a torment to the envious Man; another Man's store is the envious Man's want; another Man's just Praise is his reputed Dishonour; Anger will wast it self in time; Hatred may be extinguished, but Envy never ceaseth. Envy is the Canker that blasteth all good as to it self, and all friendship with others, it excludeth from Heaven; for what should Envy lay claim to so blessed a Habitation, where there is nothing but Love and rejoycing at each others Happiness.

4. Man is a very blind Judge of his Neighbors hear; none but God and Conscience have a right to decide what dwells within any Man's breast. He that censures his friend to extort occasions of reproof, though he should judge right, judges so

but by good hap, and does very often prove a Slanderer, instead of a Reprover, and fix a blot upon an innocent Man, and instead of mending a fault in his Neighbour, makes one in himself; for he passes sentence upon another Man's heart, which none but God and Conscience have any right to decide: No Hypothesis can be found which reconciles Quarrellousness and Charity, Vice and Vertue, Duty and Disobedience. Men pretend to do good by Reproof, whereas in Truth, 'tis only to busie themselves to create Mischief and Contention: A Man that is unsound at bottom will upbraid his Neighbour of failings, only to feast on the shame which himself creates, to make himself pastime. Let me therefore premise that reproof is not Admonition, though resentment in some cases becomes reproof, which too ill comports with Admonition; to admonish is friendly, but to reprove when there is no just Cause for it, is to reproach and vilifie, which becomes a Crime from whence it proceeds, and Blackness; the Man that pretends to refine his Neighbour, and affronts God by usurping his Tribunal, which is proper only to Omniscience; but when a wise Man reproveth a friend, he is warm with grief to see his second self chuse Evil; when he might have with so much more Honour and Pleasure, yea, and Profit have chose Good. This is a grief to a Man that have any true regard to another, to see him chuse the Paths of Death, when he might have with so much more Ease and Honour, have walked in the ways of Life: 'Tis monstrous folly to abuse our selves and our understanding, in chusing Darkness rather than Life, contrary to our own Knowledge and the Dictates of right Reason: A wise Man will turn the suspicions he have unjustly through the Instigations of some, or the Frailty of his own corruptions entertained of another, into Charity, when his Jealousies are turned into Judgment. When a  
† vicious

† vicious Person shall pretend to controul a Man of a right Principle, he carries himself Majestically, and makes a Theatre of his own Heart, by arrogant boasting: Thus briefly it appears, that a Man instead of mending faults in another, multiplies his own, and yet still goes on to over-rate himself in his own Thoughts, as if he had merited something from God; whereas in truth, 'tis only his Vengeance or Displeasure; a rash Reproof represents a Man inconsistent with himself, because it represents him an extraordinary forward Zealot, before he have learn'd to shew himself a Man by consideration, which is to invert the Order of God and Nature; for consideration is one of the first Vertues in order, and the Zeal that is without it cannot be well grounded: Rashness demonstrates the Zeal to be ill-grounded, 'tis a greater breach of decency, than it can be an act of duty; therefore a Man should be very cautious in reproof, lest instead of mending a fault in another, he makes one in himself, contrary to that golden Rule: *opinion of his own Merits, has lost of his Merits.*

† All the power and malice of Men joyned in one complicated Body cannot hurt thee, if God and thy own conscience acquit thee, that is a mean and insignificant Advance which we gain by our Enemies abasement, pride betrays it self visible in this; if others are an object of contempt, why are we ambitious of their Esteem? Neglect will kill an Injury sooner than Revenge; by obliquies a Man debases him self more than him from whom he detracts; he who questions every disgraceful word that is spoken of him shall have few friends, little wit, and much trouble; though a wound of words cuts deeper than the deepest Impriss of a Dagger; the Calumniator is but another Pigmalion, the Artisan of his own misfortune; he kills three at once, Viz. himself, the party that hears it, and the Person from whom he detracts; a Man filled with the himself and the truth

mend first thy own Errors, before thou presume to become a Reprover; true friendly reproof is a golden Subject indeed, but 'tis too often mistaken, and proves revenge instead of friendship; that is, when a splenitick Person shall search after a flaw in another, and if he finds none, to invent some seeming Infelicity, to upbraid an inoffensive Person with; to such a one the Scripture saith, What hast thou to do; to take my word into thy Mouth, whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my word behind thee? *Psal. 50. 17.* thou aimest not at the perfection of thy Neighbour's Soul, but at the blackening his innocent Name; such a reproof is a true sign of dis-esteem, not to say Malice, Hatred, or Ill-will; true friendly reproof will hide the Maladies or Dangers, while it tells a Man the truth, but not search after untruths, to blazen a Man that's innocent of the Fact, free from the suspicion of it in the sight of God, and of his own Conscience, but this demeanour shews his own weak side plainly, 'tis too visible to be hid; he goes beyond the Visitation of our Saviour's Diocess. Why dost thou judge thy Brother? Why dost thou causlessly set at naught thy Brother, a Son of the same Church, a Member of the same Communion, a Child of the same Hope, an Heir of the same Promises, one for whom Christ died, and one upon whom the Holy Ghost have bestowed many signal Favours, one who is little in his own sight, of an humble and a contrite Spirit, broken with grief at the sense of his own Misery; and exalted with Joy? At the consideration of the Almighty Mercies of the Omnipotent Creatour, the giver of every good and perfect Gift; he is a bold and audacious Man that shall pretend to be intimate with the Heart of his Neighbour, any farther than himself have unfolded his Bosom to them: None but God can pretend to be intimate with the Hearts of Men, any further than they have a visible Reason for it. 'Tis criminal therefore



fore unjustly to indite your Neighbour for that which he is innocent of, and will be acquitted of in the sight of God, and in the presence of his holy Angels; be not therefore rash in thy Censure, lest thou prove injurious to the Innocent; it is an innate Corruption to view others Faults, rather than their Virtue, and to surmise that to be Evil, which in all probability never had a Being; this Axiom may be fitly applied, that they who are evil themselves, claim that privilege of being jealous of others; consider well, and then tell me, if it be not thy own Guiltiness, that is, the false Medium that casteth that Complexion on others, which indeed thou only retainest thy self.

5. A high Degree of Wickedness ripens a Soul for endless Misery, but he that feareth the Lord will direct his Feet aright; the Wicked have no firmness nor constancy, they don't continue in the same Mind, or like themselves; but the virtuous live a life of consistency, and are alike at all times, that is, they love goodness always though they have not always the same power, or vigour of exercising it, or the same opportunities of shewing the same equal Zeal for it. They always despise the least beginnings of Vice, knowing a budding Vice may be cropp'd with Ease; whereas when 'tis inveterate, 'twill require great pains and industry to get the mastery over it; guilt of sin in the consciences creates sordidness in Men, 'tis possible for them to speak transcendent words, who possess a timorous Conscience, but surely to the fearful, *i. e.* where there is just Cause of fear, there can be no peace in himself; but to fear to offend God that is Wisdom, and true Understanding; the present fear of God createth us an Eternal security, fear him and he will banish from you all other fear; though I walk in the Valley of the shadow of Death I will fear no Evil, God is with me, the Lord is on my side, I will not fear what Man can do unto me? *Sanctifie the Lord of hosts, and let him be your fear and*

*your dread, and he will be your Sanctuary, but fear not their fear who lay a Confederacy, Isa. 8. 13. the fear of the Lord bringeth great advantage to him that hath it; 'tis the Soul's guardian-Angel, it is an Antidote against all Evil, 'tis the Mind's sentinel to awaken it, and give the Alarm against the Assaults of the subtile Enemy; where this is truly grounded, 'twill prevent the fear of Man. Who art thou that art afraid of a Man that shall die, in comparison of the Lord thy Maker? Our Saviour's Advice is, Fear not them that can kill the body only, but fear him that can cast body and soul into hell, yea, I say unto you fear him: The fear of Man can only diminish thy Happiness, but cannot make any Addition to thy Felicity: Let no fear deter thee from thy duty to God, then shalt thou flourish in Eternity, and be glorious in Truth; thou shalt rejoyce in Goodness, and shine in Glory; Patience allays a ponderous Burthen, and makes it easie; and therein defeats the adverse Party: 'Twas a blessed Victory obtained at Job's first Encounter, when beset with Machinations, Job received all those fierce blows on his shield of patience, he foiled his Enemy with his own Weapon, and became happy in being so great a Victor; and happy will be all those who imitate his invincible Patience in their sufferings: Consider that momentary Afflictions are of no duration, if all the World should conspire to vex and molest thee, they could not long make thee and object of their Fury and Malice. The patient Man is happy in every Estate, because by Patience a Man possesseth his own Soul; Patience is a magnanimous Vertue, and attended with a Train of excellent Qualifications; it is a Cordial to affliction, and an Antidote against despair; as Impatience is a perturbation of the Mind, a Self-corroding tormenting Bitterness of the Soul, a secret contest with, and repining at the Providence of God: Unadvised Anger mixt with Sorrow are the Seminaries of Impatience, but Content and Cheerfulness fill the Soul with*

with Hope in the dependance upon God's Providence, and in the sense of God's Assistance, which fills the Soul with present satisfaction, and is that which makes Eternal Happiness, and causes a Man to make a prudent use of every Affliction, by expelling all discomposed Thoughts, when we express our Love to God in a regular manner, we shall truly discern that all his Judgments \* are just, and what he inflicts on us are but fatherly Corrections, and the Products of his Love and Wisdom for our amendment; God does not delight in the Affliction of his Children, but only he sees it necessary for their everlasting good, he permitteth us to weep now to prevent our Eternal weeping. God cancels his Anger by our present Humiliation, he afflicts thee in time, that he may spare thee in Eternity; he will protect also thy spotless Reputation from the slander of living Lips; thy good Name shall have a Resurrection even in this Life, or he will enable thee to take the spoiling of it joyfully, knowing that in Heaven we have a better, and a more enduring Substance, than the vain Opinion of the vulgar, and mistaken Judgments of the partial and fickle World: Are we hated for our Vertue, and exposed for doing our Duty? We know a greater than the World was worthy of, was so treated; this usage is commonly the lot of the best Men, in the best Cause, the former Worthies met with no kinder Entertainment, and many in this World suffer for teaching their Doctrine; and for following their Examples, they gloried in Persecutions, and  
despised 3

despised Contempt; they shewed those that injured them, that they had greatness to pity, as well as Charity to forgive them; and we too may do well to consider the proof of our Integrity rises in proportion to the Trial; the greater our sufferings are, the greater is our constancy, the greater our resignation is to the Will of God the greater will be our reward, the severity of the storm will not last always; however, there are in the other World nobler Scenes than the Restoration of Fame or Wealth; and in the time being nothing can make us little but our selves, to continue firm to Conscience, to stand by the oppressed, and to be above the Accidents of Life, are the most valuable signs of Nobility.

6. God is the Fountain of all Loveliness, our Love of God must sit in the Throne of our Affections, our Love to God should be the reigning Principle of Action in rational Creatures, who are capable of knowing that God is to be admired, worshipped and adored, who is the Author of all perfection, humility and a low Conception of our selves, is a necessary ingredient of a true Love to God; 'tis a means of influencing our Minds with his holy Spirit, and exhilarating our Souls; God healeth these that are broken in heart, and giveth Medicine to heal their Sickness; his Corrections are in measure; in the true Tranquillity of Conscience, the Heart is chearful, in every Estate and Condition; it dreadeth no Judge nor Witness, but resteth satisfied in the Mercies of the Almighty, not valuing the Frowns of Men, nor their unjust Threatnings: All temporal Enjoyments are liable to Vicissitudes, and there is no constancy to be found amongst the Sons of Men; but in the Almighty there is all fulness and blessedness; there is no sure Hope but in him who is immutable. May we therefore invoke him, the immense Being, the Author of all Hope, the Donor of all Consolation? To infuse a stedfast Confidence into our Souls, by Divine Inspiration, that it may please him to wean us,

us from the Allurements of an unkind and discontent World and sweeten to us all grief and sorrow, inure us with patience, until the Times of comfort and refreshment shall come from thy glorious presence; give us the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit which is thy Word. Let the fervency of thy Love, so inflame my Soul, that it may thirst for thee, the Fountain of living Water, and be abundantly refreshed therewith; the Lord is my confidence, I will not fear what the Arm of Flesh can do unto me; 'tis God that bindeth up the broken in Heart, and giveth medicine to heal their Sickness; his Testimony is sure to the humble Man: To this Man will I look who is humble, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word; this is the Man whom God will exalt; he is now as 'twere upon the Threshold of Paradise, having the Promises of God for his Consolation, to be defended from the oppression of the Wicked; he will make an extreme Misery seem tollerable, abating the Evil of it, or proportionating thy strength to encounter it with cheerfulness; God will give thee sufficiency of Grace, even that measure which thou complaineest to want; though while thou measurest thy self by sense, thou perceivest it not; however satisfie thy self with this Consideration, that his Mercies are free, and his Promises sweet, and that thou art sinful enough to need Mercy, and sorrowful enough to desire and receive it, thou couldest not so sensibly bemoan thy want of Grace, and Faith, if thou hadst not some considerable Degree of it; trust thy Soul and Body in the hands of the Almighty; his Mercies are greater than thou canst apprehend; repose thy self upon him for Salvation: His infinite Merit will not suffer thee to want any thing that is necessary for thee; his All-saving Merit cannot be abated by thy Infirmities. If work were stood upon thy condition might have some Danger in it; because, perhaps thou canst not find that strength of hand, thou thinkest  
necessary;



necessary : But now that only taking and receiving of a precious Gift is required ; why may not a weak hand do that as well as a strong ; as well, though not as forcibly ? Be not therefore dejected with the want of thine own Power, but comfort thy self in the rich Mercies of thy blessed Redeemer, since thou suspectest thy own Weakness ; I cannot but congratulate the happy Estate of thy Soul, for no Self-sufficiency is to be esteemed of any value, our sufficiency is of God ; he is our

† *To attend an abandoned Interest upon Principles of Esteem, when 'tis neither allowed to assist, nor scarcely to wish well to it, is a certain Mark of Generosity and good Nature.*

strength, and our stay, and the † Rock of our hope ; let no Man therefore presume to repine at the seasons or measures of his Bounty : God is a free and infinitely beneficent Agent, that will not be tied to our Terms, but will give, how, what, and when he pleases ; only we must be humble and wait upon his

Goodness ; he giveth not his Spirit by measure, but as we his weak Creatures are capable of receiving it ; but we must be sure of having Truth and Solidity of Vertue, or else we cannot be capable of having it increased, nor expect he should take so much care of us as to mould us a-new by his powerful Spirit, or to enrich us with Endowments of Soul ; let none of thy Senses therefore be In-lets to sin, lest thou provoke God to withdraw his Mercies from thee, which would be a greater Evil than ever befel thee, since thou hast been blessed with the use of Reason ; fear not therefore the Rigour of that Justice, which Jesus Christ himself have fully satisfied : Doubt not that his Infinite Goodness will suffer thee to miscarry, since he have bought thee at so dear a Prize as that of his own Blood, which he freely gave to expiate for all thy offences ; let the Eyes of thy Faith and Mind therefore be so fixt upon him, that no Temptation

may

may ever excite thee to doubt of his free Bounty to thee.

*That Piety is very apt to perswade those in whom it livs, that the unfeigned practise of it; shall meet in the future World with considerable Recompence, and that they shall be Eternally honoured with a never-fading Crown.*

1. **T**HE wisest of Men are of opinion, that Piety, Innocence, and Purity of Mind, is more grateful and acceptable to God, than the most accurate Prayers or Eloquent Language, if the former are wanting: But both these offered him together is an acceptable Sacrifice; especially when the Spirit of him that offers it, is †-raised above Anger, Peevishness, Covetousness, and an eager Desire to engreaten it self by any low and worldly ends; such a Deportment must needs be acceptable to the God of Peace, and lover of Concord, who have invigorated such a Man to overcome his own Disobedient heart, whereby he is put in a capacity of being restored to a happy Concord with the God of Love, who is rich in Mercy towards all the Sons of his Love, and of his house, who bears his Yoke with an heroick Bravery, and with the Morning Sun rejoyces to run the Race by his Appointment set them; such a Man commends himself into the

† Every good Man will chuse rather to be the hate and scorn of all Mankind than of God; he values God's Favour above all other Treasure yet in this Life: At last Innocency will appear in the despite of all Accusation, and Merit will shine in the defiance of Envy, even that cruel Envy that would not suffer true Merit to live, though Reputation be checked a while by Malice; it will afterwards spread more gloriously: Exercise will make it appear more illustrious.

Power.

Power and Protection of Almighty God, knowing himself to be safe when committed to his Tuition; he will gloriously complete his own Work in him, when his own strength seems to fail; he is not discouraged, he knows his help and support is from the Lord the Rock of his strength; wherefore he is not discouraged with his own Disappearance of Grace; Faith gives Supplies from the Omnipotent Creator, from whose presence no Danger can ex-

*A Man may be allowed to reason himself into sympathy and concern, to regard, and love, and condole, as much as we please, the afflictions of a suffering Friend: If a Man suffer wrongfully, and have no ways deserved it by Demerit to cast a kind thought to him is the least that Generosity can do; without this a Man's Friendship cannot be masculine, or significant, to see a Man in distress; especially, if it be unmerited; 'tis a good expedient to fortifie our Sympathization, and awaken our Concern to his Assistance.*

*'tis opposite to the supreme Good, wherefore he bears with Meekness, all false Impeachments, referring himself and his cause to God; he had rather chuse affliction than sin; such a disposition will keep his Thoughts easie, his Imagination bright, and support the Spirit in every Disappointments.*

clude him; he is that invincible † Friend that will stick by him in all distress and affliction; no false Accusations shall be able to prejudice him against thee; nay the Enemy of Souls shall not be able to give him misinformation against thee, for God have put him under restraint, and kept him within Bounds, that his Machinations shall not be able to molest thee: Trust therefore in God who is ready to support all in distress and trouble; when he bids thee call upon me in the time

of trouble; it

|| Meekness under the slanderous Tongue is

implies that thou must

the noblest Triumph and the most creditable vindication of our Innocence, and well befits a true Christian; such a Man knows sin to be the greatest Evil, as

expect

expect Trouble; for we have no need to be fortified against that which shall never befall us; God permits us to be put under Trial, to prove the Masculine strength of our Fortitude, and with what Magnanimity we shall make resistance; if we smart a while with patience, 'tis because we may not be Miserable Infinitely. If we had no pain or trouble, we should have no use of Patients: God never gave Vertues without an intent of their Exercise; to what purpose were our Christian Valour, if we had no Enemy to encounter; give not thy self up therefore to disconsolate Darkness. but seek for Supplies for whatsoever thou wantest from the God of Love; he will supply all the defects with his redundancy. If thou supposest that thou wantest a sufficient Degree of Repentance; the very sense of the want of it, will in some measure supply the Defect; tho' the earnest Desire of having a greater share of it, is an acceptable Degree of it: Our God whose will is his Deed accounts ours so; fear not therefore tho'

the Earth be † moved, and the Hills be carried into the Midst of the Sea, even herein God will deliver thee, and be a Defence and Refuge unto thee; though the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken God will defend thee under his Wings, and thou shalt be safe while in his Favour; let thy

† Notwithstanding the good man's constant and peaceable Demeanor; yet he is suspected, 'tis well, if not positively arraign'd with an oath, he is suspected to be a sly Informer and a vile pragmatical Person, and to

render him such, they will squeeze something out of his Words or Actions, they have a hundred Gins laid for him; they do not question but they shall catch some slight occasion or other for a monstrous Report: They consider not that 'tis God alone that is the Judge of hearts; 'tis the sign of a very ill Christian to seek after specks and failings in his Neighbour, on purpose to render him despicable in the sight of the World; the spring of men's hearts are invisible to any but God; no human Eye can pierce the heart; a good man will vindicate the Innocent when he is defamed.

Heart therefore remain unmoved while thou hast his Promise of help and protection; let thy Contentment stand in this; that thou art his Favourite, his Love is better than Life, my Lips shall praise him; thy Contentment stands not in quantities, nor in qualities; but in the inward Disposition of thy Heart; see how that is affected towards God; secure that to him and thy condition will be safe, if not perfect, and thou shalt have for an Inhabitant something in thee beyond all humane Delight, a Magnificent Vertue, a charming Quality, to attract others to the Love of God: In fine, thou wilt

be a most pleasant and delectable Creature, thou wilt be able to temper Anger; & divert all strife, not only in thy self but also in those with whom thou dost converse, thou shalt be an abounding Fountain of perfection and goodness; and be able also to communicate it to others in a most plentiful manner; because God have promised to beautifie thy Soul with Salvation, the assurance of which is able to fill us with a lively sense of most harmonious Joys; such as the heavenly Spirits do now possess. O therefore that I could now love thee as those enlarged Spirits do, who dwell in the undisturbed Regions above, who see and enjoy thee in unclouded Bliss, who enjoy such a Brightness as cannot decay; they live at ease

*¶ The envious and uncharitable are so impetuous, that they cannot bear with the mention of a good Example; they cannot without uneasiness hear of those Graces that shine in those bright Luminaries of a dark Age; they know so much Evil by themselves, that they cannot believe that others are good: The sight of a good Example gauls him who is corrupt at bottom, and is only appearance not real; the good man's Vertues naturally of it self, upbraids the sinner with his Transgressions, he reproves his Thoughts; 'tis grievous to him to behold his Life, 'tis not like other mens, his ways are of another fashion; Wisdom 3, Chap. 5. first Verses.*



ease in great Tranquility, environed with the Guards of Angels, where Light shines in every Face, and Love smiles in every Countenance, where every Heart is fully satisfied in the fulness of its own Bliss, and more than satisfied with the pleasure it hath to see the Felicity of others. O may these Considerations chase away all gloomy Thoughts, and put away the false Lustre of this deceitful World, and obtain thy Assistance in the various Passages of this Life: Beautifie me therefore with the Light of Divine Knowledge, and with unspotted Purity of Heart, that I may be worthy of thy Esteem: Preserve my || Reputation unblemished, and implant in me an abounding Fountain, descending from thy Purity, of all Perfection and Goodness. Let the Thoughts of thy Goodness awaken my Soul, more powerful, to lift up itself to thee, and prefer thee and thy service before all other things: Let my Mind seek thee as the chiefest Felicity; enlarge my Thoughts more, and more, in the free and uninterrupted Enjoyment of thee, that thou mayest work thine own good Pleasure in me, and make me what thou best lovest and likest.

*|| Reputation is dearer to a sensible man than any temporal Goods; and he that out of a vindict Disposition impairs his Fame, casts himself farther from God's presence.*

2. The Heads of all the Sons of Truth, will be Eternally honoured, by wearing a Crown that shall never fade, i. e. such Royal magnificent Rewards as deserves the Name of a Crown of Eternal Glory, in the heavenly Orbs above; where the Righteous shall shine in the same Splendor by reflection, to the chief Inhabitant there, by the glorious Rays descending from God upon them; when the Sun shall blush to see it self out-shun, and overcome in Brightness; when the Hosts of blessed Spirits shall be the only Stars, and our great Lord the only Sun that appears in the Firmament; what trifling Vanity then should we suffer to inchant our Eyes or Ears, and

and draw aside our Thoughts with flattering Inticements, from the hopes and pursuits of the above cited Glories! Since Righteousness only can intitle us to them, or to have any share in them; let us

*|| In every affliction look up to God, who super-intends all our Actions and Hearts, and will enable us to bear it with a becoming Majesty, that shall be able to give us a calm and serene Mind, amidst all the vexatious Tumults of this World.*

then || free our Minds from all Earthly incumbrances, that we may be exercised in Divine Employment, and made worthy in some measure to partake of the blissful Enjoyments above: The hopes of which should enlarge our capacities, and raise us to a pitch of true Goodness, and Bliss. Supply our defects out of thy fulness, wipe off all the Spots of our Souls, that we may be as unstained as the

pure Influences of Heaven, that we may ardently love thee, and long to behold thy Face, and be filled with the true Taste of thy Sweetness, and fully satisfied from the Fountain thereof, and by thy Grace be enabled to do things worthy of excellent Recompence, that I may be enabled to look Death in the Face with a cheerful Heart: For the fear and love of thee will present it to a Man in another shape than it is in its own Nature, the Grave, that House of Darkness; by thy enlivening Power shall seem like the beautiful Gate of the Temple. Cease not, O my dear Jesus, to shine perpetually into my cloudy Mind, which is all in Darkness without thee. Cease not to invigorate my dull and sluggish Spirit, which have been often excited by thee. I long to be closely united to thee; make me still continue to feel thy Power, till I come to rest intirely in thee; fix my Mind more and more upon thy Glory; seeing nothing beneath it can give me true satisfaction: Let the hopes hereof imploy my busie Thoughts, and bring a calm into my Breast; let the Brightness of thy second Coming in Glory always

ways shine in my Mind, so as to dispel all the Clouds, and scatter the Darknes that may at any time intercept my hopes of Bliss: Let the splendor of thy brightness irradiate my Soul, to make it always lively and active in thy Service; who art a good more delightful and agreeable than any other, and able to illuminate all thy Followers, with the true Beams of thy Heavenly Light: the Comforts of which, darts Joy into my Soul; Joy unspeakable and most ravishing: No sooner doth thy Beauty appear unto my Mind and Imagination, but it invigorates both to search diligently after thee; who art all Aimable, all Lovely, and all Joy, and all Delight. O! send thy Heavenly Messengers to impart some of thy Excellencies to my languishing Soul, which will faint & dye without thee; who art a good more delightful and agreeable than all other, enlarge my Thirst after thee more and more, that I may be filled with secret Joy, which descends from Heaven upon all the lovers of Goodness; to whom the Grave, or Death, will be but an Introduction to Life, and a Harbinger to Glory; 'twill let us into that Bliss, where we shall see him who is invisible; one glimpse of which sight, is more worth, than all the Happiness that attends the visible World. To attain to which, may be matter of imployment to our thoughtful Minds, and all our active Faculties; let these be invigorated with Grace, that all our Works may be Charity, and our Dispositions Heavenly, for these only, shall make us have the Eyes of Angels, whereby we may see him who is invisible by the strength of our Faith; Lord inspire such a Faith into our Souls, that we may breath after thee, and faint and dye without thee: Mollifie our Rocky Hearts, melt and dissolve us into Divine Love, that we may for ever obey thee more universally, till thou hast implanted in our Hearts, the Sovereign Power of thy Love, and cause our Memories to become the Treasury of the manifold token of thy Love. Let all  
our

our Faculties contribute towards the compleating thy own Benefits, and let it be thy pleasure to Crown them with as great Glory, as thine own great Love can bestow; by which enable me to extol and praise thee in some weak measure, according to thy excellent Bounty; and invigorate me to immitate thy Lamb like Patience and Innocency; that I may in this Life anticipate the Joys of the other World; that thy Divine Love may entertain us with a transcendent Satisfaction: Implant in me that sure Testimony, that I am a Child of thy House, by enabling me to keep thy Commandments, the surest Testament of thy Love; who hast signalized this as a sure mark hereof. If ye love me keep my Commandments, St. John 14. 15. and then give me the supporting Testimony of having endeavour'd to observe them; i. e. an inward Joy and Self-satisfaction, and adorn me with such a brightness of Spiritual Graces as cannot decay: and from the reflection of an innocent Conscience, I may firmly Hope a glorious Reward of a small Labour, and be filled with divine Consolation, and in this Life under all Afflictions and Miseries be at ease, at least in the Calm and Serenity of a quiet Mind, and at the close of my Mortality, be filled with great tranquillity, and environed with the guards of holy Angels, which at my departure, may bear my Soul into Bliss and Glory: to hope which is a Comfort above and beyond the charms of Beauty or the loftest praises of Fame, or the applause of numerous Spectators, and the more enticing delights of curious knowledge.

3. Whatsoever our Hearts are most fixt upon, our Minds will be most apt to intend: Whatever is

our main business, that draws our Thoughts to it. Our Natures are so contriv'd that we must always be thinking of something or other; but we shall think most of that which

|| *See* Paragraph one  
of the Archbishop of  
York's Sermon, upon  
Thoughts.

is most in our eye, most in our esteem, most in our pursuit; wherever our Treasure is, there will our Hearts be also: Whatever it be we place our Happiness in, upon that will our thoughts run; upon that will our desires, our inclinations and affections be fixed. He that makes Heaven and Happiness his main business, end, and design, will keep close to the ways of Vertue, Piety and Holiness, and apply himself, in good earnest, to all the Duties of Religion: The common course of our thoughts would naturally, and easily, without the least constraint, run upon God the chief and only Object of our happiness, and we should take greater delight in thinking of him, than of all other-Enjoyments: There are greater Charms in goodness to attract us to run after it, then can be in any sensual thing: how aimable and desirable is the Love and Favour of God, what blessedness is there

in a pure Conscience \* here, and Eternal Glory hereafter.

If our Hearts be in Heaven, our thoughts will be there also: We should therefore stop the first motion of our Minds, as much as we can, when they would wander from this Object, and keep our Thoughts so far innocent, as not to suffer them

*\* an innocent mind does palliate the guilt of sin, and lessen the Offence; If 'twas done upon surprise and unforeseen, 'twas also unobsen, and by Consequence less Criminal, and the sooner obliterated.*

to intrench upon the laws of Piety, Purity or Charity. † Tho' they should

at any time against our Wills be trifling and impertinent; for 'tis not every trifling

*† We draw in the Thoughts of others by the Ear, as we send forth our own Thoughts by the tongue, distil-*

*ling our Minds and Inclinations into others, or at least declaring what we intend. Mens Souls are poison'd by the Ear, as well as the Body by the Mouth: But a wise Man will not draw in the breath of Fools, nor be poison'd by their Folly.*

Thought



Thought that is a sinful one ; for while we consist of Body and Soul, we cannot be always thinking of heavenly things, without some intermission or relaxation ; but they indeed are the wisest that think most of them ; but if our Hearts are set upon them, our Minds and Thoughts will Consequently and Chiefly be where our Treasure is, and happy is He who thinks it his Treasure and his Wisdom, to dwell in Heaven by Contemplation and divine Meditation : 'Tis a kind of anticipation of that Heaven we one day hope to be possessed off ; where the pleasures of our glorifi'd Bodies will be as Spiritual as our Body, the Joy and Pleasure whercof will be most perfect and excellent, for the more excellent the Being, the more delicate and refin'd its Pleasure, or else there could be no difference between the happiness of an Angel that's ravish'd with the enjoyments of Heaven, and an Animal that Eats and Drinks and Sleeps. How unconceivably great will our Pleasures be in that State, wherein the worst and meanest part of us, to wit our Body's shall be Spiritual and Incorruptible ; the Scripture tells us, that Heaven will be filled with a Mighty Glory, and our Conversation will be strangely delightful : As the satisfaction of the Soul, now in this Life, do, by a happy influence impart Health, and Cheerfulness, and Pleasure to the Body ; so in the Life to come, they will both rejoyce together ; and as the Body, here grieves and joys in the Pain or Pleasure of the Soul ; so in the future Life, if one be miserable, the other can be no less so also, for they are both to enjoy Good or to suffer Evil together : again, in this Life they are two different things which make up the Beauty of the Mind, and of the Body ; Wisdom, Love, Holiness are the Charms and Graces of the Soul ; but Beauty, Comeliness, good Carriage, and Demeanor, &c. that compleat the perfection of the Body. To intire happiness it is required that both Parts

of us as well Body as Soul enjoy good, and in order to this, the more Holy and \* Sanctifi'd we live, the more Happy shall we be: Let us catch at every opportunity of a holy Discourse, and learn to raise from every thing a heavenly Thought and to manage every Acci-

dent to some Spiritual purpose: Embrace all examples of an excellent Vertue, and search after all occasions of doing good, since these are the methods we must take of becoming Blessed here, and Happy hereafter. Decline also by all the Arts of Prudence and Religion whatever either company, or discourse, whatever sight or entertainment may soften thy Temper, thaw thy Resolution, discompose thy Calm, or allay thy Heavenly-mindedness, or endear the World to thee;

Sin steals in thro' the Eye \* or Ear, dressed up in Beauty, Mirth or Luxury, but it wounds while it delights, and stains were it touches. Let no Friendship betray thee to any Vice. If thou art inticed by thy Friend to any inconveniency advise and \* reprove him, this

becomes thee better then to comply with him,

in any thing that may become a snare to thee, it being the true duty of affection to do, not what is most pleasant, but most useful to our Friend, for Friendship is, or ought to be, founded in

Vertue; and therefore without the guilt of lightness or inconstancy, I may lawfully as far renounce my Friend, as he doth his Innocency, since he is

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become

*\* Virtue is like Jewels of unvaluable price, they still cast such a Lustre, as envy nor the rust of Time shall never Darken.*

*\* The Ear is the Organ of hearing the most spiritual Sense, the Agent of understanding, the Gate thro' which Sense Truth and Vertue hath its Entrance into the Soul.*

*\* Men ought to conspire to save one another's Souls, both by advice, reproof, and restraint, deborting from Evil, and animating to Good.*

become quite another thing, and hath nothing of that Charm & Grace which made me love him; \* reproof in such a case may be of great use to thy Brother, for how do we know but the influence of our Friendship, by the Assistance of God's Grace, may gain upon him, or open disallowance may at least startle him into a serious consideration; the example of our Vertue may encourage his imitation, by letting him see, that Vertue is easie as well as lovely, and hath such Energy in it, as to attract others to the Imitation of it.

*\* A calm and prudent Reproof is the richest present we can make to a Friend here on Earth. A true Friend will reprove us for those things that are invisible to the Eyes of others. Let the righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me, but let not their precious Balms break my Head, Ps. 141. ver. 5. Jere. 23. 32.*

4. A Man that would govern his actions or words well, must first begin to bring his \* thoughts under Government in some measure, tho a Power to do this be not alike in all Men, nor to the same Man at all times; some Men by the very principles of their make and constitution, are much better able to govern their Thoughts than

other: Some that are naturally weaker, have by long use, and many tryals, obtained a greater Power over their Minds and Thoughts than others, whose temper make, or constitution may have greater strength then the former whose diligence have done that which was wanting in their constitution. Again, the same Persons that at some times have a greater power over the motions of their Minds, may at other times have a less command over them, and this according to their health or business, or as many other contingencies of outward

ward things do affect them, and the reason is this, because two things at once cannot well possess our Minds; for when we are intent about one thing, we cannot have much room or leisure for thoughts of an other nature, therefore in many cases we cannot think of what we would, nor hinder abundance of Thoughts from coming into our Minds against our Wills; yet it is allways in our power to assent to our Thoughts, or to deny our consent to them, though the first motions of our Minds be not allways in our power, for these we are not allways able to stop, especially when some sudden Thoughts, Apprehensions, or Passions, or Desires are excited in our Minds by any Object that is at a sudden instant presented to the imagination, these are very often irregular, because they are produced so quick, that there is not time enough given for Reason to interpose; these a Man cannot help coming into his Mind, but by a serious exercise in the Practice of Piety and Vertue, he may bring himself to such a Temper, that he shall not have so many irregular undecent motions in his Mind upon any occasion whatsoever as he was wont to have, and that which was formerly a Temptation to him, shall at last be none; but the first motions and workings of his Mind, however they be occasion'd, are in a great measure out of his power. And farther, there are some cases where a Man's Thoughts are in a manner forc'd upon him, from the present Temper and Indisposition of his Body; so that though he be in no passion, though there be no unusual Objects of Sense that excite those Thoughts in him, nay tho' he never so much resolve not to think upon those things, yet so long as that habit of Body lasts, he cannot avoid those kind of Thoughts; so that in this case there is little room left for the government of Thoughts, but those Thoughts and Fancies are thrust upon them, and are not the free, natural, voluntary operations of their own Minds,

but the effects of Vapors or Hypochondriac Melancholly, and these are indeed great Infelicities, but by no means any Sin, any further than we approve of them; and to approve of them, for any tolerable Good Man is impossible. No Man is drawn to commit Sin, by any State or Condition, that God hath put him into, no; nor by any Temptation, either outward or inward, that is presented to him; 'tis not a Sin to be Tempted; if we consent not to the Temptation, nor yet to feel that we are Tempted by some disorderly Inclination, that arises in our Minds, from the indisposition of our Bodies: The consent of our Wills, indeed to a Temptation, is a Sin in us; yet that Sin, is not so great as it will be afterwards, if it be brought to Action; Sin in the Desire, or Purpose, is not so great, as if it be brought to Action, when it comes to be acted; it is then a Sin in it's full Dimensions, and the consequents of it may be fatal without Repentance; therefore to prevent these Errors, before we suffer them to proceed so far, is our chiefest Wisdom. For why should I suffer my self to do that, now, which I am sure I must be sorry for hereafter, or else it may prove my Ruin: We are therefore to be careful to resist the first beginning, and motions to Sin: This being the surest remedy, to preserve in a great measure our Innocency, and to keep our Minds from consenting to Temptation; we shall hereby have further advantage; we shall gain strength against the next time, that the Temptation returns, every check we give to the first motions of Sin, makes the next Assault of them the less furious; and if we thus watch and guard our Hearts, we shall in time obtain such a command over them; we shall not be troubled with a quarter of these irregular Desires and Passions, which heretofore upon several occasions used to be kindled in us. By this Method, we shall strengthen our Faculties, and enlarge our Powers, and by degrees, bring our  
selves



selves to that happy Temper of Soul, that there will not be much War, between the Law of our Body, and the Motions of our Mind; but we shall be Crucified to the World, and the World to us. And in order hereunto, we must not only keep bad Thoughts out of our Minds; but we must endeavour always to have a constant Spring of good ones, by using all such helps and means, as may inspire us here with; such, as may leave lasting Impressions, of Virtue and Goodness upon our Minds; such as heartily Pray, this will prove an effectual means, for the keeping our Souls steady to God and Goodness, and securing them from the contrary; let us therefore take every opportunity of raising our Minds to God, and thanking him for his Infinite Love and Goodness to us, imploring continually the Influences of his Grace and Holy Spirit in us, than shall we begin our Heaven, while we are on Earth: Thus have I shown, that the first Motions of our outward Members, are all at our Command, though the first Motions of our Minds be not; and if we are careful in this matter, we may prevent our Minds from Disturbance.

5. \*thought is confined to

no Place, but in a Minute surrounds the Earth, and ascends above the Heavens, and visits all the empty Capacities of Infinite Space;

we cannot extend our Thoughts so far, but we can imagin something farther; we have an imagination of

Infinite Space, which we can set no bounds to, but how far soever we extend our Thoughts, we can still imagin something beyond that; and therefore we fancy, there is something farther extended, though we cannot comprehend it, nor see to the end of it; the Mind is an Immortal

*\* We never speak of the length, or the shape, or the bulk, or the colour of our Thoughts; since that would be an absurd speech by which we could mean nothing.*

Essence, enriched with many Excellencies; 'tis called by some, the lively Expression of the Divinity; 'tis the Mind that is capable of tasting those rich unseen Joys, which are altogether strangers to the Sensual Man, in whom the faculty of Reason lies Dormant; but the Mind that have a true tast of Goodness, is filled with an Infinite Desire of Happiness, and is eager in the pursuit of it, by all the Methods of Holiness, without which, no Man can arrive to it. There are many different Degrees of Joy, which the Good Man can tast in Spiritual Employments; he knows no measure in the Desire of Happiness, wherein the Divine Joy Essentially enters; a well governed Thought, Perfinates or Assumes the Soul, Informs and Animates the whole Man, makes it become brave and wise, fine in Temper and delicate in Disposition; it causes him to increase in Excellent Virtues, that wins to it self Cœlestial Endowments, directing him to walk in a Sweet and Delightful Path, seeing the ultimate intent and Purpose of Human Life; is to fit and prepare the Soul, for the more bright Regions of Eternity, and the Blessed Society of Saints and Angels, in the Kingdom of Bliss. He that governs his Thoughts aright, is said to have his Conversation in Heaven; the careful Guidance of these, will direct the whole Man to walk with God; so that he shall at no time Deviate from his Precepts; a Mind enlghtned with true Reason, will make a Man Rich in all Eruitful Knowledg, and Good Fruits, 'tis a Holy and an Innocent Mind, that makes a Man truly Wise to Salvation, and abound in his own Happiness; it contenteth in every Estate, but nothing will satisfie a Man, that hath not a Mind qualified to satisfie it self? What are Honours or Affluence, where a Qualification of Mind is wanting, to manage them aright to the Glory of God; resign thy Thoughts therefore to Gods Immenstity, and his  
Wisdom

Wisdom will direct thee into all Truth, inure thy Heart to ponder on God, and Heavenly things, and such will thy Thoughts, Words, and Actions be, the Heart of the wise teacheth his Mouth; custome grows habitual; Wisdom reffecth in the Heart of him that hath understanding: Thoughts are the words of the Heart which God heareth, the Thoughts of the Righteous are right, but the Counsels of the Wicked are deceit: Love good Thoughts, and thou shalt be furnished with them, good Desires flow from Celestial Thoughts; by committing thy works unto the Lord, thy thoughts shall be establish'd in the love of Good: It is a signal Token of a compos'd Mind, if it can contain it self within the compass of holy Meditations, which God's Word will allways furnish us with; Wisdom as a Monitor advises, that our Thoughts and Mind be allways fix'd upon the Ordinances of the Lord, and meditate continually on his Commandments, and he shall establish thy Heart and give thee Wisdom at thy own desire; wherein thou shalt encrease and multiply; acquaint thy self with true good, then shalt thou rejoyce securely: They most delight in Secular things who are ignorant of Eternal, but temporal Felicity rather drown than refresh the Mind; but a wise Man will look upon these to be of no intrinsic value, and not worthy to employ his Mind upon them, knowing they shall be re-demanded from him at pleasure: he will seek for something more stable and perminant, that cannot be Ravish'd from him, to wit, that Treasure that shall go with him to Eternity, to wit, a peaceable Conscience; content with all circumstances, and conditions, as well under undeserved ill fame as good, according to the holy Apostle who professed to go through bad report as well as good report, 2 Cor. 6. 8. From whence we see that goodness and innocency is Self, is no Antidote against evil Tongues; a good Name is no less wound-d

for the time with a false Reproach, then with a just Crimination; and yet this is an evil against which there is no preservative, but resignation to the Powers above, for herein stand still and see the Salvation of God, who can gloriously deliver thee from the greatest of these abuses, he shall make thy Righteousness as clear as the light, and thy innocency and just dealings as the noon-day: If thy own Conscience acquit thee, no slanderous Tongue shall be able to penetrate thy Spirit so far as to hurt thee: an unjust Reproach shall never be able to do thee much real injury, for if

God and thy own Conscience acquits thee; value not who accuses thee, so long as thou art conscious to thyself the Accusation is False, thou Sufferest under a publick Infamy, I do not ask thee how justly: He was a wise Man that said, it was fit for every good Man to fear a false Reproach. If thy Conscience acquit thee & pronounce thee guiltless, flight, condemn, and scorn all the spight of malice; what is ill Fame but the corruption of unsavory breath, that cannot hurt thee if thou avoid it. That Man gave an high praise to his Sword that said, it was sharper then slander; but who would repine to be slandered, when he considers the Son of God and Saviour of the World did not escape it; in Him was no guile, in Him the Prince of this World could find

\* Every wise Man will smile at injuries, and despise the Evaporations of a vindictive Spirit, and scorn Reproaches for Righteousness sake, knowing the greatest Glory consists in God's Favour: A good Man thinks it below him to be concerned at the Slanders and Reproaches of a poor envious World, he can keep a calm and serene Mind under the greatest Tumults, while evil Men Rage about him, he can feed upon the peace of a good Conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost: These Men dare do something to convince the World their conversation is in Heaven, to which place they with all good aspire.

find nothing, yet the Sons of Earth spared him not but called him the Prince of Devils, and surely thou mayst be content to be slandered with lesser crimes. His high Majesty have prefore-told thee; that thou art blessed, when they shall cast out thy name causlessly as evil, i. e. say all manner of evil against you falsely, for his Name sake, because you will cleave to your Duty notwithstanding all opposition to the contrary, but be of good Cheer, God will turn all these abuses to thy Glory, thy just Renoun shall not always be cover'd in oblivion, nor be blackn'd by oblique, God will turn those undeserved Curses into Blessings; he will requite thee good, for their mischevous intended evil.

6. Of the thirty-nine Books of the Old Testament, there are very few; not above seven or eight, but what are quoted in the New Testament, by Name, or for some remarkable Passage; and as Books of the same Character with the New Testament; the Old Testament, also have the Testimony of the New, to vouch for it's Divine Authority; both which were Written by Persons Inspired, and that were Inspired in the Writing them: They had the Assistance of that Divine Power, operating upon their Minds, and guiding as it were their Pens in what they Writ; and what they Writ, was to continue in the Church, and to be a Standard of Faith, and Rule of Life, to all Ages; but what they Taught, could continue no longer than Fallible Men could retain it. So that we may conclude, that they both Taught and Preached, by the Special Assistance of the Holy Spirit, as they were all so, under the Conduct of it, when they Writ: Those Divine Pen Men, conceived themselves to be alike inspired in what was Writ, as in what they Taught; they Wrote with the same Apostolical Authority as they Taught, and therefore were doubtless Inspired in Writing; for they



were the best Judges of their own Inspiration and could best know when they were Inspired and accordingly they have declared they Wrote those Books, by Divine Inspiration; they in their Writings, often appeal to what they Taught, in what they Writ, which in it's Brightness and Majesty, appears to be worthy of such Inspired Authors; there is in the Holy Scriptures, such a Lusture, as causes them to shine beyond all other Books; which shews them to proceed from a Spirit that is Divine, from the beginning to the end, they have upon them

\* *Revelation is a divine Communication, and a mark of divine Favour. In the Holy Scriptures God's Justice and Power are set forth in all their Authority, and yet; so temper'd with his Mercy & Kindness, as does raise and quicken the hopes of all; a Divine Attestation; is that which exceeds the Power of Nature: God's Power exceeds Created Causes, and is wholly Supreme.*

the Signitures of an Almighty Power and Wisdom, in the Contemplation of which, we may reap much Pleasure and Advantage. Here we find out the Traces of the Divine Original, which Entitles God; to be the Beginning and End of all his Works; the Fountain and Spring of them all; in those Parts of the Scriptures, which seems to want the Accomplishments of humane Eloquence; and that Decorum † and Artifice, with which humane Books are embellished; we may still see so much Vertue

proceeding from them, that makes it evidently appear, that the less there

† *There is a Decorum, to be observ'd, to make up what is called Symmetry and Proportion.*

is of Man in the Composition, the more there is of God; and that it can have none for it's Author and Inditer but him, who is the Fountain and Original of

all Good; by whose Divine Assistance, we may pene-

penetrate into the true meaning of them, and square our Lives according to their Rule.

7. In Writing the holy Scriptures, God gave the Apostles a Mind to indite, as well as a Mouth and Wisdom to Teach, and to Preach; as the Spirit gave them utterance, and in the other, Direction and Assistance, by suggesting to them things worthy and excellent; the Gospel they wrote was the same they taught, the Workmanship proceeded not from the hand that wrote, but from the intelligent Mind, the giver of all good and perfect Gifts; they were Instruments appointed by the Efficient cause to compleat the Work he had afore ordain'd, in order to the Salvation of Man's Soul; he made them the honourable Instruments to compleat the glorious Work of the supporting and building up Man in his most holy Faith, without which he could never have pleas'd his Maker, or ever thought himself worthy the Favour of so beneficent a Benefactor, whose Mercies are everlasting, by whom he hath appointed a Means to Ransome Man from the Gate of Eternal Misery; which is laying hold of the Merits of Jesus, and repenting of all our false Conduct, in our Holy Race; his Wisdom have made our Remedy certain, be we but Penitent; and we cannot be Miserable: Nay shouldest thou after Repentance, unhappily repeat thy former Offence; this must be confessed to be true Cause of Hearty Grief, considering thou hast repeated an Offence against an Infinite God; yet be not too much discouraged, or dismayed; this unpurposed Reiteration of thy Sin, shall not be thy Final Overthrow; it may cause thee Grief of Soul, indeed, at the astonishing Consideration of thy own Weakness; but since thy Advocate, is an Infinitely Compassionate Being; he will pity thy Weakness, and supply the Defect by his Grace: So that thou shalt henceforward, more vehemently detest and abhor all Sin, and all the Symptoms, or Appearances

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ces of it, and cleave to God, with more vehement Desires, and earnest Breathings of Soul; thy Heart being unfeignedly Contrite; by thy late Miscarriage, take a fresh-Occasion, to lay firmer hold of thy Saviour, and re-inforce thy Vows, of more careful and strict Obedience; thy Unpleasant Repeated Weakness, may grieve thee indeed, but can be no Final Prejudice to thy Soul; had we to do with a Finite Compassion; we might justly fear the Terrors of his displeasure, but since his mercies are infinite, we cannot Sin more than he is freely ready to pardon upon our new obedience; an infinite Compassion cannot be abated by many repeated Offences, if they are not willful and obstinately continued in: His mercies are infinite as himself, neither the greatness nor number of Offences, can make any difference in his free Remission: The condition of the Gospel is free Remission of Sins to every penitant Sinner, that hates and loaths his sins and himself for having been guilty of them, and with holy Indignation resolves to revenge such weakness and folly: a wound receiv'd doth but whet the edge of true Fortitude. God will uphold thy Feet from falling, tho' he suffer thee to be tempted, yet he rejoyceth to see what glorious resistance thou makest, 'tis not how hardly thou art assaulted, but how strongly thou art upheld; many Saints and Martyrs upon the Racks and Gibbets have found their Consolations stronger then their Pains, while the goodness of God sustains and supplys thee with abundance of Spiritual vigour and refreshment, answerable to the worst of of thine assaults; what cause hast thou to complain of thy Sufferings; Temptations, when overcome yield no small cause of Triumph; by them is our Faith tryed, the exercise of which worketh Patience, the perfect work of Patience is an entire Blessing of Grace, the number of enemies adds to the praise of Victory, to overcome  
single.

single Temptations is commendable, but to subdue troops of Temptations is glorious. Be confident thy Glory shall be according to the proportion of thy Tryal. Patience is a vertue whose Element is miseries, it owes its Being to pains and calamities, were there not miseries there could be no Patience, it feeds upon sorrows, thrives by disadvantages, grows rich by poverties; it must needs surmount all opposition, for the more it endures the greater it is; it is impossible for calamity to hurt Patientce, it is made perfect by sufferings, the greater a Mans Patience is, the more strong and mighty is his Soul; nothing can quell him, no disadvantage can overcome him; his Courage is more than his Assault, he dareth all things, because he can bravely endure them; Man is magnifi'd by his Tryals.

Justin Martyr, as God first made the Light, and afterwards gathered it into the Sun, so God first opened the light and knowledge of himself by immediate Apparitions and Angels, &c. and then he reduced Light into the Sacred Scriptures, and made them: Thence must we look for the true Light that alone Lightens every Man. The two Testaments are like the two Cherubims one looking towards the other, both looking to Christ, who is our Propitiation. Holy Men were the Pen-Men of what was dictated by the Holy Ghost.

7. In this Life the Relation we have to Misery is perminent and lasting; wherefore we should with eagerness seek for a sure Inheritance in that City which cannot be moved, which faideth not, Heb. 13. ch. 14. The Joys thereof are unconceivable, much beyond our Conception; and though in this Life we endure hardships, as good Souldiers of Jesus, yet in the other World we shall accompany Him in blis; and be possessed of Jays unspeakable and full of Glory; Though we are here debarred of many Blessings we could gladly wish to be possessed off, yet the hopes of the Joys we foresee in futurity counter-ballance the inconveniences

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\* God does not cease to be present with those that fear him, though they are not allways sensible of the favour of his Life-giving presence; - He sometimes seems to be withdrawn not by departing from the Soul, but by the not manifesting himself to it. Nothing can quiet the Terrours of Conscience but God who is the Prince of Peace, and greater then the Consciences: 'Tis the Spirit of Grace and Truth that must give Consolation and Light, and convey to the Soul the reviving beams of renewed Joys.

we here meet withal *Moses* was denied entrance into *Canaan*, but was receiv'd into Heaven, many are the afflictions of the Righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of all, Gods Mercy inclines him to compassionate our misery, & will give us a happy issue out of it. If therefore we would be happy here or hereafter, we must remove all guilt from our Minds by a serious Repentance, and then we shall be possessed of an inward Joy, and a Self-satisfaction, for where guild is there must naturally be uneasiness, but if our Consciences be free from this load, there arises a Joy from within which nothing but experience can describe. The whole Frame of our Happiness depends upon the Wisdom of our deportment; he that is meek and lowly shall inherit his own quiet: The whole work of Sanctification is comprised in this one Grace of Meekness; this procures to a Man holy Innocency, and gives him a true tast of Gods Favour, who will in due time deliver him not only from the conquest but also from the conflict of Sin: Let no Man therefore betray himself by having conference with Sin, entertain no parley with it, lest hereby it incroch upon you and gain you to its vassalage: Conference with Vice is the way to be ensnared by it; set a firm guard against it at the door of all your Senses, let Modesty be a Vail and an Ornament to all your Vertues, that no Commotion may disturb your Peace. 'Tis the designe of the Enemy of Souls, through



through malicious Envy, to spoil us of our Crown, and also to Rob us of our Comfort: If he cannot deprive us of Grace then to bereave us of Peace; yea such is Satans envy to Man, and malice to Christ, that by how much the more any of the Faithful are Eminent in Grace, by so much the more violent in Fury is he set against them; but such is God's Power as to restrain his Fury, such is God's Mercy to set bounds to his Malice, that he may not destroy but where God permits, his Chain is limited: God permitted him to afflict holy Job, but 'twas for the tryal of Job's Integrity, and his future advancement to Glory. This Life to the Faithful, must still be exercised in a Spiritual warfare: Temptations are so ordered by divine permission, as to make for the good of the Faithful; a good Man will gain some advancement by his tryals; God will not suffer those that are his, to be tempted above what they be able, 1 Cor. 10. 13. God proportions their burthen according to their strength, or else give them strength proportionable to their burthen, so that the force of their assaults shall not exceed the measure of Gods Grace; God will give the good Man not only Victory but Triumph, so that though Temptation for a while cloud the Sun of Righteousness, yet when dispelled by supporting Comforts upon the Soul, refreshments flow on it with healing Consolation, then the light of God's Spirit, and the consolations of Grace appears comfortable and glorious; Holy desires administers matter for divine Thoughts, God governs the Soul by the golden Scepter of his Grace, casting down every high imagination, and brings into captivity every vain Thought to the obedience of Christ: Vain Thoughts are an interruption to our holy Services, their continual buzzing disturb the Mind and interrupts the Devotion, they creep in undecern'd, as bold guests they force admittance, though they find no wellcome, they take from us the sweetness  
but

but not the sincerity of our Devotions; we are therefore to watch our Thoughts and Desires that we may keep them in as good order as we are able, for the more the disorder, the more our trouble, but hereby we may be more careful of our inward and outward deportment: God is privy to the first risings of our inmost Thoughts, God's excellent prerogative discerneth and judgeth them: His mercies are infinite and numberless to forgive the disorder of them; our best Thoughts are very unsteady and fleeting, our Thoughts waver through the weakness of our Minds while we are in these Tabernacles of clay; vain Thoughts will still attend us, if not accompany our divine Services, and our devoutest Supplications; many holy Persons will tell you, they have long languished under the crosses of vain Thoughts and earthly distraction, yet after a long conflict have obtained a joyful conquest, they have after heavy mournings found sweet refreshments, comfortable enlargements, and ravishments of Spirit. When we are deeply sensible of our own insufficiency and infelicity: God will supply us with divine Grace and heavenly Consolation; when we see our own emptiness. God will supply and fill us with his inexhaustible springs: He is said to be touched with a feeling of our infirmities and will supply our defects, and accepts us through the incense of his Son's Merits offered up before the Mercy-seat of the throne of Grace: Thus by divine Assistance our Salvation is fully compleated for us, all that is wanting is our qualifications to receive it; and the application of it to our Souls; God's power can enable us to conquer all difficulties, God can make us as fix'd in our Thoughts: and as intent in our Services, as the holy Worthies of old were; God can remove all our vain wandrings from our Minds, our vain Thoughts still, resisted with diligence, and bewail'd with sorrow, shall never deprive us of Gods Blessings, nor declare us void of  
Grace

Grace, though distractions and interruptions have drawn us from our selves, yet let not distrust drive us from Jesus, but let hope draw us to his inexhaustable Fountain which cannot be expended or dried up: Let no vain Thought remove our integrity from this Rock and Fountain of Life, tho' our Thoughts are sometimes loose, yet let our Faith be allways fix'd upon the comfort of our Life, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the World who is pleased with us when our Thoughts are Spiritual, and our Minds as a mint retains all heavenly Meditations; good Thoughts enrich the Mind with invaluable Treasure, such as is worthy to be laid up in the Heart, and do furnish the Soul with divine Meditation: True sanctifying Grace will convert every occasion into Devotion, and will so order our Practice that all Accidents of Life shall administer consolation to us, and is able to keep the Mind free from intanglement, and the Soul from languishing in dejection, and makes the whole frame become the Temple of the Lord, and adorn'd with invaluable Treasure, i. e. all Spiritual refreshments and ravishments.

*If we are reprov'd undeservedly, we must make our defence modestly and thank the reprover for his good will, but if the reprover be misinform'd and will not believe the just vindication, he wants Charity and cannot be a fit reprover. Brutish carriage is but an ill Stratagem to fish for esteem with; the best reprovers are not spotless themselves; a Friend when he reproves will not speak like a Master or a Magistrate, but like an equal; if he shew angry when he reproves; it should be the anger of a Friend, not the anger of a Panther: Be not high-minded but fear. If you will venture upon reproving an innocent Person, you should do it with a becoming Majesty, and believe his defence, and not fix a blot where there is, nor have been any, i. e. any that you reprimand him for, this is an indication that you would have him guilty, though it be only in your esteem, not in the sight of God*

God; nor of his own Conscience; why should your opinion be his crime, your Fancy cannot make a Criminal estimate in any but your self, upon whom you have merited Divine displeasure by such unchristian demeanor: you want the principle Ornament of a Friendly reprovcr, to wit, Charity and Sincerity.

8. Let us bear our affliction with patience, and wait upon God in Hope, and rely upon Christ by Faith. To suffer for Righteousness sake makes a Man become a Candidate of the Celestial Glory, having received the Earnest of the Spirit, the Seal of his Redemption, the first fruits of Glory; this Man sees by Faith, that while Men unjustly load him with injuries, they heap upon him Rewards, while they spoil him of earthly goods, they increase his heavenly Treasure, yea, each scornful Reproach he sees by Faith does but add a flower to his Garden, each violent act a jewel to his Crown: These light afflictions are but for a moment, they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. God will vouchsafe us temporal deliverance, or Crown our Sufferings with an eternal Salvation: No enemy can go farther then God permits him, let all the ill treatment we meet with be to us as a spur to Vertue, and an occasion of renewing our Minds and adorning our whole frame with all the Graces, that we may become intirely refin'd, and to our other accomplishments have solidity added to our Thoughts, and our whole constitution such as may be an ornament to our Minds, that we may still retain our integrity though it be with ever so much difficulty: If we are put to that trying necessity of parting with our Fortunes or our Consciences, to retain unspotted the latter whatever becomes of the former: Integrity & Honour is preferable to all other accomplishments; these will not abandon a deserving distress, nor leave it to languish without assistance or regard. Starve your Vices but not your Friends, let Sympathy and Sense

Sense commiserate the afflictions of *Joseph*: If you have no power, yet retain the inclination of doing good, by being good. Conscience is a universal principle, and reaches the whole duty of every Christian; 'tis uniformity and proportion which makes things look great and graceful, our whole Life ought to be all agreeable to Truth and Holiness, that we may finish our Life with Wisdom and Application, and make

a right distinction betwixt Honour and Consciences, & to observe that the former aims more at appearances than things, and had rather make a great shew than do a great action; its principal end is Reputation, without distinguishing upon the means which carries Men to chase according as they find it fashionable, but yet true Honour when it wears its proper Character will always be under the government of Vertue which is a

noble quality, it warms the Mind with true Zeal for the glory of God, and the general good of all; Honour is a vigorous principle of action, 'tis a guard to decency and a spur to glory, it hardens fortitude, and secures constancy, it ripens improvement, and prompts Men on to the extent of bravery and greatness, but when 'tis counterfeit it mistakes and perverts its right and proper end; but when it is directed by unbiaſed Consciences it cannot miscarry, it cannot be a disparagement to be govern'd by the interests of an other Life: Honour must never contradict a true principle of Consciences, nor be parted from the true Rule of it, to wit, the Fear of God and the keeping his Commandments in which there is great delight,

*\* The witt which imagines, which invents, which refines, and which subtilizes in all things is common enough, but good sense which compares, which examines, which weighs which considers the reasons and tendency of Things, and determines not; but what it has good Reason to determine, is the most rare thing in the World.*

for



for to Fear God is truly to Love him, and every one that loveth is born of God, and to be born of God is true Nobility 1 St. John 4. 8. this Love is called Royal, Jac. 2. 8. the love of God makes a Man undergo all difficulties with chearfulness and

*\* Thoughts are seeds of actions; a Soul inspired of God have no unsavoury breathing, but will make over it self intirely to God, who have kept his Conscience from many wounds and his Soul and Body from much dishonour.*

bravery: Love is the inclination, and application \* of the Heart and Mind to that which is beloved, wherein there is no sense of labour or difficulty, but rather a longing and impatience of not having a speedy success of our endeavours, to find out and injoy that which is desired; therefore if we desire God above all things,

we shall long to be united to him; a heartily love of God is our best Companion while we live, and when we dye, and in reference and subordination to our love to God, we should love others as well as our selves, which is the modus of loving our selves; this will lead us to a Crown that faids not away, yea such a deportment is not only a means to a Crown, but a Crown it self, and will Virtually adorn the Head of him that wears it, and shall at last be changed to a never ending Crown incorruptible, to invite us to the love of other, the ordionary ways are the Ear and the Eye. First the Ear hath a door to admit it, a door that no key opens so well as good report, that will easily cause us to Venerate, according to their merit, those whom we never saw. No Musick can set anothers Heart-strings to the same Tune with ours so soon as this. Secondly, the Eye of the Mind, or the Eye of the Understanding can invite our Veneration to others, according as we value their deserved worth; may we therefore be inclined to rever others for the similitude they bare to divine Love, so saith the Apostle, let the Love of

of God be shed abroad in our Hearts: By the Eye of the understanding we see the worth of what we love, therefore Faith must open to us the casement of Heaven; that we may admire and adore the Majesty that dwells there; for God only, in proper speaking, can be the deserving Object of our intence Love, all other Objects are in subordination to God, who is the supreme Motive and Invitation to Love; to affect or attract our Hearts to Love him: God is the fairest not only of ten thousands, but of millions of thousands, *Cant. 5. 10.* the most amiable of all that can be beloved? O that he would cast some gracious Aspect on us, so as to cause us to Love him more and more with all our vigor and strength; the love of God is able to ravish every holy Soul; our Eyes and Ears and all our Senses should advance our Love to God, the lovely Object of our addoration, O how inviting are those lovely beams that flow from him; able to attract all to its admiration; his lovely Tokens are wonderful to behold in the visible World, the Thoughts of this should now draw our Hearts to Heaven, as it once drew him down from thence, to give us a touch of his ardent Love; his preventing Love draws all Men to the confession of his goodness, why then should we tire our Love with so many Objects so infinitely below the value of this one, in whom are hid all the Treasures of his Wisdom, *Col. 2. 3.* what is it we would have, is it Beauty, then seek the love of it in him, the sweetness of whose Face is the Joy and Rapture of Angels, the only vision of God, is the complete happiness and full satisfaction of the heavenly Court; or would we partake of true Riches or Knowledge, or Pleasure, then study the Love of God, who is the *unum necessarium* to all these, and all other ends and purposes; of him we may buy without money all that will make us truly Rich, Wise and Good, but we poor foolish People are apt to busie our selves most in that which heaps

to us the treasures of his Wrath? O why will we not purchase Vertue at any hazard? that is able to invest us with such boundless Treasures, when we are perswaded to love God and Goodness, we are put upon that against which there is no apology, he that loves not God cannot expect a Blessing: How Fair, how Beautiful is the Object of our Love, most able to awaken and winn the dullest of Affections. For his sake let us mildly demean our selves to all Men, let not meekness of Spirit be to us a stranger, let our demeanor be to all Men angelical and serene, walking with God as *Enoch* did, by a serious study and practice of what is pleasing to him. Let us therefore walk in Love, divine Love angelical and refin'd, this is what *St. James* styles the Royal way: The completion of the whole Law, no walk can be more healthy nor more pleasant, then this which leads to Heaven; God has set his mark upon this walk, the walk of Love, this walk is beyond all company, it leads to intire happiness, this is the Epitome of all, this is what the Lord requires of thee. Honourable are its Titles, and high its Commendations, they are the Root and Life of all the Vertues.

9. A good Man will not lightly despise, nor rashly censure any, but blest God for the superemency, that his Majesty have put in some Men who have been wholly swallowed up in divine Consolation. The Mouth of the Righteous is exercised in Wisdom, his Tongue will

*\* When a Man's Life is vertuous, it forces honour from contempt, and snatches it even from the hand of envy for Vertue will shine through, and beyond all detraction. vertue Anoints the Head of the Living, and embalms the Body of the Dead. There will be a Resurrection not only of our Bodies, but also of our Credits, therefore destroy envy and bind charity faster, that it may become genuine, a good man overlooks the censures and vain opinions of the World, with all the honours and preferments of it, chusing above all to approve himself to God.*

be talking of Judgment; the Law of our Lord is in his Heart, and his going shall not slide; he prays for that Faith that may conduct himself, and that Charity that may take others with him to the Throne of Grace, and that God would be pleased to cleanse the Thoughts of his Heart by the Inspiration of his holy Spirit, that all his Actions may speak a heavenly Language; every Action hath a several Tongue, and in the harmony of of many wise Actions is the true art of Rhetorick; it hath divine Strains, of more than vocal Musick, and when wisely employd, hath power with God to prevaile for Mercy upon all the offending World. If Sanctified by the merits of Christ, in whom the persecuted may find Refuge, the poor Wealth, the sick Health, the despised Glory, the humble Exaltation, and all the miserable, by relying upon God, a general Forgetfulness of their miseries; in God a holy Soul disgusted with the World meets with true repose; & will seek to find that content in himself which all other Creatures will not afford; a good man is thoroughly humble in the presence of God, from whence he cannot go, even that God before whose Presence universal Nature trembles: The liberty of holyness sweetens the misfortunes of the miserable, and makes them tast divine Consolations; the Remembrance of Gods present and former Mercies inflames them, his promises comfort them, his threatnings awes them into fear and reverance, and his Consolations works upon their Hearts exceeding Joy, and fills them with Treasures of Grace and Mercy, and makes them capable of Prayer which is a Dart that flies from Heaven, and makes a Man change his Thoughts that were once Earthly, into Heavenly Contemplations, delighting more in unseen Joys, then the Men of this World do in perishing Treasure; therefore Death that despoils the living of their pomp, shall cloath such a Man with new Honours and fresh Glories. Death is that labour

harbour which God have designed for every one; 'twill releasethem of that misery that attends all the visible World, 'twill convey us to that place of happiness, where there are never ceasing Crowns in reserve for us; and a sudden Death to a Man that is wisely prepared for it, is but a sudden Joy, when it finds him in the state and exercise of Vertue: 'Tis an evil to none but to those whom it finds unready, i. e. unprepared for it, and to them Death is the ruine of all their hopes, because it will be a perfect consignation to an eternal Sorrow. Let Men therefore dash their Sins to pieces, that threatens the eternal Destruction both of Soul and Body, as they desire to avoid an Ocean of eternal Misery and Sorrow; for he that does not love God can never enjoy him, and to be deprived of his Presence, will doubtless be a union of endless Woe and Torments; there is no wise Man but had rather endure all temporal Torments then be in the disfavour of God, or in the state of Sin. Keep Sin therefore from thy Soul, drive it thence with all thy vigor and might, that thou mayest serve God in the labour of Love, and have a sure Title to the privilege of Heaven. Let thy diligence be firm, and thy obedience humble, then shall Patience be thy Rest here, and Heaven thy Reward hereafter; Heaven is thine already, only thou must strive till thou hast full possession of it. God will feed that Grace already begun in thee with an everlasting spring, by the sweet influences of his Love: God's Kingdom is come into us when our Wills is brought to his Will, when our wills are bent upon God and Goodness 'tis a sign we Love God it then appears that Grace is in us above Nature, Heaven more our hope than Earth our enjoyment; the Spirit of Grace and Goodness have overcome us, and will bring us to the inexhaustable Fountain thereof, when Christ hath once possessed the affections there is no disposing of him again. Keep Grace therefore in exercise, that it may continually grow and encrease, that we may at length arrive to the strength of Perfection. Let



Let us be heavenly minded even amidst our earthly business, let nothing steal away our Hearts from God, nor Heaven, but let these be the object of our Love and Choice: Let the image of God in us shew itself by a commanding Majesty, by a divine exercise of all God-like actions, that we may at length attain the image of God in perfection. Let us eagerly delight in God, and then we shall know all his ways, and Christ's Throne shall be set up in our Consciences, whose bowels of compassion melts in pity towards us; he will hear the desires of his own Spirit in us, to make us sensible of his blessed Presence, he will give us the evidence of Truth and Peace in our Hearts, which will produce in us integrity of Mind, and preserve that spiritual fight that is in us from growing dim, and fill us with joy and gladness of Heart, that the high praises of God may be in our mouths; for giving us so great a share in his eternal Spring of pleasure, agreeable to the most Divine palate. Imprint all thy lovely Qualities in my Heart, make a deep impression of thy lovely Truths in my Soul; let the penetration of them be deep in my Mind, that I may be continually devoted to thy Fear, and be daily raised to a greater height of Christian Wisdom. O enrich me with the infinite Treasure of thy hidden Wisdom, that all the inclinations of my Soul may be pious, and for ever settled in a constant habit of the adoration of thee, that at length I may be completely Happy in being made by reflection exactly like thee who art the Sovereign of all the World.

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*Of the nature of Temptation, and of the difference between Feeling them, and Consenting to them.*

1. **T**HE exercise of Purging our Souls cannot be finished till our Life be ended, for we have many things to encounter: But our Victory lies not; in being not sensible of them, but in not  
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consenting to them; now if we strive earnestly against them, God will enable us to overcome them: Let us not then overmuch afflict our selves with our Imperfections, for our perfection consisteth in an earnest resisting them, and a careful watching against them, but observe the difference betwixt feeling and consenting to them. If our feeling them displeaseth us our case is safe, for we consent not to them unless they please us, since delight and pleasure ordinarily serveth as a steep to consent; wherefore always retain a firm Resolution never to consent to the least or greatest Temptation, but be sure that sin be always displeasing to us, and then we shall not with ease consent to it. So that though it should encompass our Will, nay our very Heart, yet; it may never come within it; for if it be contrary to our will, we cannot imbrace it, neither will it gain any dominion over the center of our Spirit, for if our Will give no consent to Sin, there is no danger of our being ensnared by it; but yet we are not to expose our selves to Temptations, unless we entangle our selves with unnessecary Combats, and bring Snares upon our selves which we might avoid; for many that have withstood violent Assaults, have been overcome with small Temptations: therefore whosoever dalies with Temptations, does in a manner Assault or Tempt himself: For God have no where promised us extraordinary Assistance, unless we correspond faithfully with his Grace, and not give way to the greatest or least Temptation, for we are not to put our selves in hazard, nor expose our selves when we may avoid it; but we are always commodiously to watch against Sin, and avoid the greatest and the least occasion of it: For we must as much as in us lies foresee the evil and fly from it, and at no time give occasion to the Temptation, for he that gives way to the Temptation, does give great advantage to the Tempter, but if we give no occasion to the Temptation very probably our condition may be safe for God will give thee Aid from

from his holy Habitation (I will not say if thou demand it) but if thou earnestly and humbly petitionest for it; but then look not the Temptation in the Face, for this is tempting thy self, and putting thy self out of the protection of God, for he has not promised to be our guide unless we also desire to be our own; under God, whose methods we are to observe if we intend to be eternally Happy. Therefore look not upon the Temptation when it is strong, unless it shake thy courage: Therefore divert thy Thoughts with some good and commendable exercise for good and wholsome exercise is a principle means to chase away evil Temptations and Suggestions, which cannot prevail if our confidence be fix'd firm upon God, for his goodness will enable us to resist those things which would destroy and ruine our Souls; wherefore we must have great care and diligence that we may gain the Victory in this Spiritual Combat, that our Souls may be elevated to pure and excellent Love by tasting divine and heavenly repast: But then having by God's Grace overcome, in violent assaults we must take care that we be not insnared to consent in small Temptations, always having in our Eye, that so many Victories as we win over our petty enemies, so many Jewels will adorn us hereafter; like so many precious Stones curiously Enameled and set in the Crown of Glory, which God have prepared for us in Heaven; wherefore let us Fight valiantly against the greatest and the least Temptations, that God may think us worthy his acceptance and Crown us with Glory hereafter: May we therefore beg his Majesty always to defend us against all assaults that would destroy us, always begging him to put us in mind that we implore his pity, that his bounty may keep us from yielding to our own overthrow, but then be not sorrowful when thou hast done well, but be chearful in God who is the support of all that trust in him, for 'tis the enemy that makes use of sadness to afflict the just by exercising them with violent Temptations, for as he endeavours to make the Wicked rejoyce in

their Sins, so he labours to make the Good sorrowful under their good Works, and as he cannot procure evil to be committed but by making it appear pleasant, so he cannot divert us from good, but by making it appear unpleasant; he takes delight in sadness and melancholy, because he is so himself, and so shall be eternally, therefore desires he that every one may be like himself; this mischevious sadness troubles the Soul, puts it into disquiet, brings inordinate fears, giveth a distaste of Prayer, dulls the brain, depriveth the Soul of counsel, resolution, judgment and courage; ruins her strength, and disorders her whole frame, ravishes all sweetness from the Soul, & renders her Lame and Impotent in all her powers, like a hard Winter: it moves away the beauty of the Field, and is præjudicial to most living Creatures. Wherefore if thou art assaulted with this dangerous sadness, practise the remedies following, viz. what St. James prescribeth, is any one sad let him pray, St. James *ch. 5. v. 14.* Prayer is a Sovereign remedy against this fatal disease. Now Prayer is a lifting up the Soul to God, who is our joy and consolation, and will comfort us if we depend on him; now if Charity be the Plant, Devotion is the Flower; if Charity be the precious Stone, Devotion is the Lustre; if Charity be the rich Balme, Devotion is the odour of sweetness; for it comforts Men and rejoiceth Angels, it causeth pain it self to become accrete, or in some cases accret for God's Love; it knows how to abound and how to suffer want, it renders equal profits, honour and contempt; it entertains pleasure and pain allmost with the same chearfulness: Wherefore it replenishes our Souls with aimable sweetness, for a devout Life is pleasant, happy, and aimable; this moderates Anger, restrains Passions, deprives Men of sensual Pleasure; but it fills them with heavenly Joys, sweetens the Soul with inward Cordials, which renders all our actions pleasant, easie and sweet, for this makes bitterness be converted into delightful sweetness. Briefly, Devotion is a most heavenly exercise, Spiritual, and most

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Pure, full of delightful marrow and sweetness. It is a Spiritual swiftness and vigor, by means of which Charity worketh in us, making us not only draw mony, but of our purse to give to the Poor; but clemency out of our Heart to pardon our Enemies: therefore 'tis principally necessary to qualifie us for Heaven, for by this we are directed to walk by the Rule of wise Counsels, and carefully to watch over all our actions, that we may be secure from all the Ambushes and Wilds of our Ghostly enemy, that we may treasure up Wisdom in our Affections, to refresh and comfort us in our Spiritual diseases, that our Souls may resemble God by devout and holy dispositions of mind, which may cause us exactly to imitate our Lord Christ by Gospel holiness, paying to him the sacrifice of benificence, that God may strengthen our Hearts and rejoyce our Spirits, and we may stand constantly unmovable always looking and aspiring unto him, keeping our Souls always in a holy indifferency amidst the inequality of divers motions, which the condition of this Life brings; that his Majesty may fill our Souls with heavenly delight and savory satisfaction in all Spiritual exercises, and we may be enabled vigorously to imbrace the love of God, and become constant, even in the midst of inconstancy, that the divine and heavenly dew may mightily refresh our Souls with heavenly and serafick Enjoyments; being filled with true Devotion, feeling great tenderness of Heart, even melting with the love of God, being ready to put in execution whatsoever is acceptable to him; that his powerful goodness may inspire us with solid and Godly, *i. e.* true Devotion, which consists in a Will resolv'd, and Vertue readily elevating it self to God, renouncing all perverseness of affection, with every evil intention, that the Enemy may not make us weary of good Works by sadness, but the good Spirit may over power us, by filling us with chearfulness, and internal Consolation, causing us to tast how sweet the Lord is, by experimenting his



heavenly Comforts causing us to melt into Tears of joy ; when we find in our inward Man the Comforts of the heavenly Light, *i. e.* peace of Mind, quiet of Conscience, inward Joy ; for these are they that fit us to frequent the holy Eucharist, which we at no time ought to absent our selves from, when we can with conveniency be so happy as, as to be partakers of it without the let or omission of a greater good, which indeed ought not to be omitted, because God requires Mercy and not Sacrifice, *Hosea 6 ch. 6. v.* as in the case of a sick Friend or the relieving some that are ready to perish, or in some other such instance that the occasion required our Assistance, but then we must not let this sway us so far as to cause us to neglect it upon every slight occasion, for unless it be matter of moment we are not to omit it till another opportunity, for there be many sort of good Works which we may do as opportunity presents, in Intervals & times when we cannot approach the holy Sacrament, for that is to be had but at certain set times which no one ought to omit if he can help it without (as I said before) it be to do a greater good, something of great moment ; and then if we are forc'd to be absent from the celebrating this Sovereign mystery we ought at least to send our Hearts and Affections thither, to assist there with a Spiritual presence uniting our Affections to our Christian Brethren, and use the same Devotion ; as if thou wert there present with the holy Assembly in the Church, that thy Heart may essentially worship and adore Almighty God ; that thy Heart may melt into sweetness, and thy Eyes into tears of pity in behalf of the afflicted World, who consider not the danger they lye in, by reason of their non-observance of Gods divine Laws, and their neglect of performing their publick and private Duty to God, both which ought diligently to be performed, the private to assure our own Consciences that we are not Hypocrites, and the publick to render a double honour to God ; for God is more glori-

glorifi'd, and the devout Soul more comforted in the publick Office of the Church, for there ariseth a greater Joy to every devout Soul, by the beholding so many devout People worshiping and admiring the Almighty: Therefore we may admire the wisdom of the Church, in dedicating solemn set times for publick Worship, for in them more honour is given him, then private Worship how devout and sincere soever it be. Wherefore the publick Worship of God is to be preferred before private, for God is more glorifi'd by the publick Union and Concurrence which we make of good Works with our Brethren and Christian Friends, for by these we efficaciously help one another in our heavenly Race, for good example is a help to inspire or provoke one another to love and good Works, *Heb. 13. 16.* for inspiration we call all those allurements which may provoke us to abound in good works.

2. Most Men are desirous that Justice should be executed in their neighbours Houses, but Mercy and Conveniency in their own, wishing their own words to be well taken, though at the same time they are capacious and touchy at those of others; we take it ill that they do not recommend us or accomodate us as we desire, whereas they have reason to be offended at us, for desiring to incommode them, but in these cases we ought to square our actions and manners according to Equity and Truth, giving to every one according to that which is equally his due, for this is just and equitable: Therefore give every one the honour due unto him according to his quallity, his deserts, or his office, that every one may strive to honour God in his proper place and station, for the whole Creation calls upon us to do this, though it be but with a dumb Language, yet intelligible enough to stir us up to praise our Lord, for all things praise him, the Fountain of Life and Comfort. Wherefore let us make an Oratory within our Hearts, that our Lord may enter in, and there for ever remain, and with-

draw us from all vain delights, that our Spirits may be sequestred from all vain pleasures, that we may be worthy to be near our Lord, making our Spiritual retreat to him upon all occasions, there to recreate and refresh our selves, amidst the turmoiles of exterior affairs, for with him we are; as it were in a Castle to defend us from all Temptations, in the midst of a tempting World, that would fain be our ruine and destruction, were it in her power: for she does all she can to overthrow the Children of peace, but be of good courage when these Temptations are over, and these dolours pass; the everlasting Joy that God will give, will remain with thee for ever; for if in this World the lovers of Vanity be permitted to shine in great pomp, splendor and prosperity, what great Felicity is reserved, think you, in the other World for the lovers of Truth and Vertue. May this therefore incourage us to go on courageously in the ways of God, for our Labour will not be in vain in the Lord, *1 Cor. 15. 58.* May we therefore give up our Souls to God, seeing his high Majesty have said *1 Sam. 15. 22.* I will honour those that honour me, and again, *Psal. 50. 23.* he that offereth thanks and praise, he honoureth me, and to him will I shew my Salvation. Wherefore to be reprehended, despised, and accused by wicked Men, is but a pleasure to a man of courage, for who knows not that there is a great reward due to those that suffer for Righteousness sake, and are abused for well-doing; if we suffer for ill-doing, that is, the due reward of our deeds, and not any thing; think worthy, but if for well-doing, great is the recompence of our Reward.

3. Again, If we suffer from; or by ill-men, we are in some measure able to bear it with tollerable ease, but if we suffer false reproach and ill treatment from good Men, our Friends, or Parents, there is the due Tryal of patience, for from these 'tis hard to be born, for the contradictions we receive from good Men are much more insupportable then others,  
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yet it often happeneth that two good Men that have both of them good intentions through the diversity of their opinions do raise great Persecutions and Contradictions one against an other; wherefore we have need to be patient under every Accident that befalleth us; and we must not be content to be afflicted, but to be prejudiced by them, for our Lord have bidden us to possess our Souls in patience, and to bear affliction with evenness and calmness of Spirit, for we must bring our selves to this if we intend to be perfect in patience, for the more perfect our patience is, the more perfectly do we possess our Souls, for which cause we should consider that our Lord have saved us by his sufferings, which he bare patiently for our good, and he was an example for us, that we should imitate his patience, though not the act of dying yet the acts of mildness, meekness and humility: Wherefore let us not limit our patience to such or such a period, but thankfully bear whatsoever God shall please to inflict upon us, for he that extends his patience to whatsoever God shall please to send, does, no doubt, please the great Majesty of Heaven. Wherefore let us endeavour to bear patiently whatsoever befalls us with all possible meekness; some Men indeed there are that would suffer no tribulations, but such as are honourable, as to be wounded in Battle, or to be prisoner of War, or to be persecuted for Religion, to be impoverished by some Quarrels, wherein they got the mastery; these Men love not the tribulation, but the honour of it, but he that is truly the Servant of God suffers indifferently the Tribulation accompanied with Ignominy, and those that are honourable; for God will esteem us honourable for so demeaning our selves; for this King of Glory will recompence us, not according to the littleness of our deserts, but according to the greatness of his Mercy, Power and Goodness; No nor according to the dignity; or indignity of the Honour, or the Office that we

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bear but according to the sincerity of our Hearts, and the measure of the Love and Humility with which we serve him, but we must take care of esteeming our selves thus happy when in truth we are not, but to try our selves, we must consider and weigh our selves, to see whether those Vertues and Graces are in us or no, for there are many things esteemed as Vertues which in truth are not, of which it is needful to speak a little, *i. e.* I mean Extasies, pretended Raptures, Insensibilities or Impossibilities, defecial Unions, Revelations, Transformations and such like pretended Perfections of which some Books do treat, and promise to elevate the Soul even to contemplation purely intellectual to an essential application of the Spirit, and to a supereminent life, these are not Vertues, but oftentimes the delusions of the adversary, or pretended Miracles of which the *Roman* Authors are very numerous: 'Tis true, if the perfection of true Devotion, could indeed be attained to, it might better the Soul of the humble Christian, but when they are falsely pretended to, they corrupt and abuse the Man, and in a manner unchristen him that was a Christian; but were these real they would be a pattern of the Life to come, an invitation to seek after that Kingly City, for these indeed would be most valuable Benefits; and would be a lively help to the improvement of our Minds, causing us to feel in our Souls some taste of the heavenly Life. *Some Men have naturally much heavenly Flame, and great vehemence in their Passions, much time in their Hands, with much help from good and enlivening Books, or great quickness, wit and parts which can readily advantageously represent to their Minds, the motives to these dispositions which is able to imprint a high measure of God's Love upon their Minds, to affect their Hearts deeply with a sense of his goodness, to cause them to seek after the heavenly Treasure, that is in reserve for all that act by the Rule of Wisdom: Others indeed their are of cooler Tempers, and have lesser leisure and fewer helps and slower understandings,*



standings, and cannot attain to such heights of Perfection; yet these may be very acceptable in the sight of God, who requireth not so much service from these of lesser abilities, for to whom much is given his Majesty expects much service, *Luke 12. 24.* and oftentimes puts upon them greater hardship, because he have endowed them with greater strength to act for the glory of his great Majesty, having bestowed on them strength of Mind, peace of Conscience, with courage and valour to do brave exploits, convincing unreformed and unimproved Persons, teaching them to avoid troublesome Fancies, which infect the understanding, that they might not sink by leaving their natural clearness, but be better fit to receive wholesome impressions of Reason and solid Truth, to settle and quiet their Consciences; and comfort their Spirits, submitting themselves to the sovereign and supreme Court, to wit, the Church, to whose authority God have committed the government of Divine things; and therefore every one ought to submit himself to be guided by it, as being ownedly Members and Subjects of it; who is by Legal consequence their lawful Judge, she being a true part of the whole Catholick Church, and so by a necessary sequel the true Church, *i. e.* a true and sound part of the whole: for this is an agreed upon Doctrine by all sound and faithful Men, as is confessed by the unanimous Votes of all select Divines, and by the solid and impregnable grounds of their proceedings; having set aside passion and all preingagements of opposition; so that they state their adversaries Case without partiality or prejudice: So that they fully practice according to their Authority and their Rule, which is the Sacred Scripture; for these Men speak by the commission they receive from Christ to teach, *St. Mat. 28. 19.* as saith that worthy Martyr of Christ, and great Bishop of Lyons, *St. Irenaeus*, why do you with such pains seek for Truth elsewhere then in the Church of God, and from those Men who are Author-  
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rized by her Authority? for they receive full commission from her to declare those Truths that are contain'd in Sacred Scripture, from whence the whole Church deduces those Sacred Truths that she Teaches, to which Truth many of her Martyrs have sealed with their Blood. Seek not truth then elsewhere, since 'tis easie to be found in Christ's Church; Faithful members of which Church are the brave Men of the Ch. of *England*, for they are a most Catholick Society of Christians, not only good Men, but good Subjects to God and his Vicegerent, for amongst them is the Truth, that rich Treasure of most invaluable worth, for these speak moving words in Gods Name; to move the Hearts of their auditors, for they are ambassadors for Christ, *2-Cor. 5. 20.* beseeching us to be reconciled to God. In his stead therefore we ought to submit to and acquiesce in their Doctrine, for they declare heroick Truths, courting Men to seek to be quickned with Heavenly endowments, that they may be filled with the power of God's Spirit, that they may be educated and worthy to be in his Family, chusing always the Word of God for the Rule of their actions, that they may never be guilty of any revolt from him, but seek to be united in Heart with their Christian brethren that they may not be deficient by their own default, but by union of Hearts put a period to all troubles, and be no more at odds one with another, nor with themselves, that they may be at perfect agreement with God, also; being immovably fix'd to serve him with joyful, meek, and quiet Hearts, laying aside all inveterate prejudice against even our greatest Enemies, that would obstruct our peaceable serving God, for if we intend to be in a state of Salvation we must not hate any one Man in the whole World, for this is a Fundamental and All-resolved point, to wit, that we must be at perfect agreement with our very Enemies, so as if they hangar gladly to feed them, and if they thirst, as gladly to give them drink,

drink, *St. Mat. 5. 44.* that by our meekness we may melt them into love, and by our charity win them to God, who would have all Men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth, for I will not; saith his great Omnipotence, the death of any one Sinner, *Ezek. 18. 22.* be therefore gathered unto me, and I will have mercy upon you and bring you to Glory, even to Joy unspeakable, and desireable by every wise and good Man, that have but any regard to his own interest or happiness. Therefore be wise and consider and imbrace Life, for why will you dye? when I have provided both Balm and Physician for you, *Jerem. 8. ch. 22.* Therefore turn your selves and live in endless Bliss and Glory, which I have reserved for you.

4. A Good Man's Hope is the beginning of Felicity; because 'tis grounded upon a firm Foundation, to wit, the love of all the Vertues, and every Vertue is one Degree of approach to God, and true Religion, is as pure as the Sun; we receive new Favours from God; every moment is big with abundance of his Mercies; the Rule of God's Will is the Comfort of a Good Man's Life, and he will ever cleave to God's Testimonies with his whole Heart: If God's Word speak to him with Power, 'twill overcome in him his Nature, with all the Difficulties that attend it. When the Grace of God is in a Soul; all it's Powers are sensible of it's sweetness; such a Man will esteem Vertue beyond Reputation; he will do all he can to merit a good Reputation, and then disdain a bad one, and seek his own Consolation in his own Mind; the disdain of Injuries, is the death of Slander; but too severe a Resentment, revives it: This is to be acknowledged, the force of it's Arms, when we confess it, have been too hard for us; they who are hurried into an excess of Concern, when they find themselves Injured; satisfy the design of those that sought to offend them; this is to render our Enemy pleased, when we give him Testimony, that he hath hindered us from being

ing so; though our Reputation may be stolen from us or retrench'd in some measure; yet at last it will return again; if our Innocency and Patience remain, in every case if they blame us unjustly, we ought to feel more Consolation for the Truth, than Trouble for the Imposture; the Innocent should no more afflict themselves, when they are said to be guilty; than if it should be said they are sick, when they are in good State of Health: It is from hence we may learn, why the Vertuous are less revengeful, when they are wrongfully blamed then the Vicious are; for as those that are not beautiful, yet do often desire to be esteemed so, with their Disguises: So the dishonest Persons endeavour by their Artifices, to gain the opinion of being Good and Wise; but this appears to those that are truly Wise, as if they wanted both Wit and Reason; and to be certain there can be no true Felicity where these are wanting; 'tis true, the most Innocent are obliged to do all that they are able to avoid Scandal, and to take away all matter of Slander; but the most Wise and most Vertuous often labour in vain in this matter, for there are no rules or means infallible in this case for the preserving Reputation; and since it depends upon the opinion of others, it follows Fortune more than Prudence, but innocency with a good conduct is sufficient for this: The Son of God himself, who is the source of all goodness and wisdom, saw his Reputation slur'd for a time by the impostures of his enemies, who made him pass for a glutton and a Wine-bibber, whose example does abundantly shew that Vertue and Innocency does not allways preserve even a good Man's Reputation: Sometimes there is I know not what infelicity that follows Persons of worth, which exposes them to obloquy they know not why, and this happens more often to the vertuous then to others, being accused of that which is the hate of their Souls: Many of the former Worthies with all their Wisdom and Vertue, have not been able to defend them-

themselves from the injury of reproach; but every good Man will however, endeavour to practice all the Vertues, and merit the testimony of a good Conscience, which is infinitely preferable to the best Fame in the World: The testimony of a good Conscience is more to be esteemed than all other enjoyments; for true Vertue is a thing that is hid in the Heart, and can be intirely known only to those that practice it; other Men are often abused in the Judgment they make of it, humane Judgments is full of uncertainty, and what advantage, or what wrong can Vertue receive from this error, the Judgment of any Man cannot recompence Vertue, since they cannot know it, they are not knowing enough for this, for the best of these are ready to give a bad repute to those that merit only a good one? but no wise Man will be uneasy at that which he ought to deride. There are very few Persons that judg with any soundness of that which they see; besides no Man can see the Heart of another, but God the searcher of Hearts: How vain is it for a Man to labour with great unquietness of Mind to know how he stands in the opinion of others, and afflict himself for the error of the Vulgar, as if 'twere but now that the ignorant had begun to mistake or lye. If our happiness consisted in the opinion of others, our Felicity were but very slender, and ill-secur'd, if it were in the power of the ignorant or the malicious to take it from us, for these have nothing but darkness in their Minds, and guilt upon their Consciences, and their praise; nor censure is not to be valued; they cannot look in their own Bosoms for satisfaction or repose, and they are willing to be of an opinion that no others can find such Treasure that belongs not to themselves.

*The Philosopher is a King; but he enjoys nothing but his Arguments. The City of Troy preserv'd itself under all the Calamities of a ten years Siege, and at last lost it self, in one night of Mirib and Debauchery. I esteem those, that use moderation in their Pleasures more than those*



those that practice Patience under Sufferings; 'tis more easie to render ones self victorious over Grief than over Pleasure: See here the mischief that Prosperity breeds in the Mind; it obscures the Reason, and corrupts the Conscience, and emasculates the Mind; we are born in Tears, we live in Trouble, and we die in Grief: Death is the only Remedy of Grief; Grief is no other than a long Death, and Death is no more than a short Sadness; 'tis more difficult to support ones self under Grief than to abstain from Pleasure; Sadness have more power to destroy us than Joy, though Joy also is able to take away Life. Many have dyed with an excessive Joy; how can it be said to make no change, when it can kill; yet there is more difficulty to preserve the Mind in Adversity than Prosperity. We are in no less danger, when the Remedy depends upon our selves, than when it depends upon others, notwithstanding we should be endued with great Constancy and Strength of Mind: There is no more blame due to a Man for being subject to Grief, than for being liable to dye; we are not obliged to be unsensible in this Life, because we are Immortal in the other.

5. Reputation is a mighty Treasure, and serves no less to Vertue, than Daylight does to a Picture, to make it appear; yet if a Man deserves a good Reputation, but Enemies and Fate impose on him a bad one; he is to seek his Consolation from God; and in his own mind, let your Actions be managed with Conduct, and your Thoughts composed, and you Will little value what Severities you meet with from a broad, if you find a full and a quiet Peace at home; 'tis good with Patience to endure what we cannot overcome. Thus may we surmount the Maladies of the Soul, by strong Reasonings, and all Inconveniencies both of Body and Mind, by invincible Patience; then shall you be free from Insolence, in a good fortune, and from despair under an evil one: The Joy that arises from the Conscience, has marks that are altogether particular; 'tis the purest that is, and resembles the unspotted brightness of the Stars, which always cast  
forth

forth an equal lusture; we ought always to demonstrate a steadiness of Mind, in the most Tragick Misfortunes, and to shew a Temper equal amidst the greatest Inequalities of Affairs that may e-  
vence; we have neither a light Spirit, nor a small Judgment, but are judicious and reasonable in all things, modest under good Fortune, and patient under bad, for this were a Felicity but very ill secured, which the ignorance or the malice of an enemy can take from us, and there can be no true Felicity where the wickedness of another can rob us of our peace, but if our own peace be secured, the raging of our enemies cannot rattle us of any true satisfaction. If you depend upon another for happiness, you must needs be destitute of it, because at the same time they promise you Fidelity, perhaps they are forming a design to violate it; if there be no alteration in their Resolutions there is in their Words; levity comes of weakness, and constancy from strength of Spirit: A Man of no Principle will promise Friendship with a great deal of Ceremony, without truth, or but of a moments duration; when an alteration is just, it is a matter of choice, but when it is not so, it proceeds from levity, I suppose there is no more fault in the forsaking an ill opinion, than in getting rid of a Fever, to repent when we are in the wrong is as necessary to the Mind as Food to a Man in health; we count the Body weak when it sinks under a small burthen, so we ought to believe the Mind cowardly, when it faints under an Affliction; if we resist not when our case is defenceable, we wrong our cause, and instead of defending our selves we yield to our enemy, without putting him to the trouble to conquer us: If we are brought to suffer for Conscience sake, we should yield and dye with as much sweetness as constancy, and make no more resistance to the Sacrificer, than a Rose does to him that gathers it; Faithfulness is always constant and chearful, even amongst the greatest difficulties;   
prudence

prudence is said to be the Eye of the Soul, and discretion, or discerning of Persons and Things, is as the Apple of the Eye: Prudence is worthy of admiration, it is something like divine, if this be wanting all other qualities are without Ornament, or at least without Order: This is one of the embellishments of the Mind, it makes it more beautiful: The goods of Fortune, and of the Body, ought to yield to those of the Mind; we are therefore to shun and detest all disguised Vertue, for such will be more in shew then reality, and to every discerning Eye be easily discover'd: 'Tis necessary therefore to exchange appearances for realities, and wisely to regulate the motions of our Minds, as well as those of the Body, and consider that nothing can look lovely in Fury: 'Tis therefore more glorious to conquer passion then enemies; there are some that use great art in venting their slanders, who are not willing to hurt, but with guiled weapons they disguise their disparagements of another under an appearance of praise, when they pour out their vindictive Carrectors, they pretend it is with regret that they do so, but this is to imitate the Archers, who draw the arrow towards them but it is that they may the better send it to the Mark they aim at, 'tis no small consolation to innocency to think, that calumny, even at its first birth, had the impudence to assault the pure and most holy God, whom the *Jews* did not only Crucifie in Person, but in Reputation: they massacrated his Name as well as his Body; that's a most forcible Reason why we should not be troubled when our inoffensive life is called in question by the base enemy of Vertue; we ought not to receive the wounds of Slander when we have it in our power to hinder them from reaching us; 'tis easie to know those that are chaste, from those that are not so; the latter will examine all things, even to the least circumstances, their wickedness serves them for pattern to judge of Evil by; their own experience and ill designs makes them put bad interpretations

tions upon innocent things; the Vertuous excuse Faults rather than publish them, and on the contrary the Vicious are always unmerciful towards those that are like themselves, to make show as if that crime were unknown to them, but the effects give the lye to their words, and this artifice succeeds so ill to them, that they disgrace instead of defending themselves. The Honest and the Good chase Vice out of the World by their Charity, and the Licentious banish Vertue by their Slanders; but be it granted that some do not utter Slanders themselves, yet nevertheless when they listen and give credit to these, their Ears are no less guilty than the Tongue of the others; and if calumny is the murder of the Reputation, these are at the least to be accounted accessaries: There are some that listen with delight to all manner of Slander, that cannot endure one should speak to the advantage of any, and who think that while their company are finding fault with all the World besides them; they make an Apology for their own Faults, in shewing that there are many like themselves, as if the number of Criminals could Authorise their Wickedness, when they hear the Vertues of some Rewarded with their deserved Praises; they sit as sad and uneasie as the ugly are wont to do, when they hear the fair complemented in their Presence; the readinesse they have to believe a fault in another; is a certain sign of some inherent in themselves; Flattery also is something near allied to Slander; the one assaults us with Poison, the other with a Sword; therefore the Wise and the Good will not give encouragement to either. Wise Kings deride the Complements of depending Courtiers, as knowing 'tis Interest more than Affection that inspires them, and none but the untaught will value themselves by Flattery; Modesty is a most Powerful Charm, without it Beauty have no life; the other Vertues are worthy of Admiration, yet this only merits Love; they that afflict themselves for a Misfortune.

tune which have no Remedy but Patience, make their Error the entertainment of the World; 'tis the want of both Wit and Goodness, to make a bad Interpretation of good things; he that is Wise, will so regulate his Mind, that he may direct his Affection to the right Object; to wit, the Love of God and Goodness, and devote to God the hidden Inclinations of his Soul, and never dare to vilifie Vertue, nor to palliate Vice; the best and wisest Minds, ordinarily hate Tricks and Cheating; they are for speaking the Truth, and to tell freely their Thoughts; the good Minds, have no other aim but doing good. A good Conscience, will dissipate all manner of Disguise and Constraint: A seasonable Correction, may contribute more to the Ornament of the Mind, than Jewels at the Ears can do to the adorning of the Face. There are many like Jezebel, in her Hatred of *Elijah*, in hating those who reprehend their Faults, 'tis loathsome to them to be shewn their Errors. The Flatterer, may be deem'd, the most pernicious of Enemies; for his ill Practice would impose upon the all-knowing God; and abuse the Eyes of them that are Wise; and as God abhors a false Devotion, so a Wise Man ought to detest a false Amity; a Flatterer is dumb, in the Presence of the Vicious; there is nothing so contrary to Complaisance, as Conscience: This does very often condemn, even while the former is commending; but as the Slanders of the Malicious do not hinder, but that we may be very good; so notwithstanding the Applauses of the Flatterers, we may be very blame worthy: Flattery is then the Capital Enemy of Conscience, it would extinguish this Divine Light; it would lull this careful Sentinel asleep, it would silence this inward Monitor, which ought to have a constant Liberty to speak to us; and who lashes with remorse if we deserve it, while the Flatterer is heaping up false praises, 'tis better we undergo censure than complaisance, because 'tis less dangerous to be accused than praised falsely: The wounds.



wounds of a Friend are of more worth than the kisses of a Flatterer; it is less danger to fly from a shadow than to let an Enemy come within reach of us; 'tis better to fear an apparent Evil, than not to fear a true one: Both Slander and Flattery make War against Vertue, the Flatterer accosts us to debauch our Reason; Reason and Prudence are greatly wanting in those that love complements, the wise love not to be deceived.

6. To regulate the Mind and the Conscience, is one of the noblest undertakings that we can acquire, in order to which we should keep our selves as far from ill conversation as we can, their hatred will do us less harm than their conversation. Evil Men are enemies that will do us more mischief by peace with them, than by war: Their temper is such, that when they can do no harm to our Consciences, yet they will do it do our Reputation; they will strive to render us infamous, though they cannot make us Vicious, their Spirit seems fit to invent what is wicked; they that shew a hatred or coldness towards Persons of worth and religion, declare by the aversion, they hate that which is good, they despise Felicity, being destitute of wit and reason: There is no true Felicity that can be acquired without Vertue; no Man can own his Felicity to his ignorance, but to the innocency and goodness of his Mind; tho' 'tis said of the thoughtless, that they are not unhappy, 'tis for want of a sense, that hinders them from being so, and this is no very honourable advantage to them, that they are free from care and trouble, as Stones are free from sickness, or Beasts from remorse of Conscience. If a marble Stone feels nothing of pain, we do not say for that reason it is very well, we do not account it in health but unsensible; and thus it is after the same manner with the thoughtless, they are never the less miserable, though they know it not. Their amity have no aim, not so much as the good of their own  
Minds,

Minds, they value not others, nor know not the art of having a good agreement with themselves, there is both wickedness and torments in their own Minds, they want the true beauty of Mind, they are strangers to the never-fading charms of Vertue, how can I be fond of an object where there is no lovely quality to be found in it; if there be no power in it to ravish with pleasure, the Mind nor the Eye, how can it be admirable; the beauty of the Mind is preferable to that of the Body, the former we may elevate to the love of him who is the source of all perfection: We should therefore treat both our Bodies and Minds as Temples of the Holy Ghost; he that is vertuous will not loose his Vertue, nor change his constancy, though the Stars should change their course, or Fate its everlasting Laws. Vertue makes us immortal, without Vertue every place is ill cultivated; every vertuous action is not to be valued under the price of a Diadem. Vertue is the Divine beauty of the Soul, it sweetens all our behaviour and makes all our actions delightful; it builds up our reason to a transcendent height of knowledge, it makes a Man a living Fabrick of Piety, he is to be extolled for his constancy and strength of Mind, he would no more change his constancy than prevent the stroke of Death; when sent by a Messenger from Heaven, and brings him the tyings of a blessed reception into Glory. Thus have I shewn the love of God to be immortal, when it can cease to live, it must be acknowledged it was not true, Love ceases to live when it ceases to reign; it cannot divide its Power without losing it: May we therefore earnestly endeavour by love to be united to God and to one another for his sake, whose example we ought to imitate, as far as 'tis imitable, not in working of Miracles, but in doing all the Duties enjoyned by his royal Law, the Law of love, which is more precious than Rubes, and more to be desir'd, it winns us Peace here and Felicity hereafter. 5 DE 60.

